

From The National Review.  
MISS BRONTE.

*The Life of Charlotte Bronte, Author of "Jane Eyre," "Shirley," "Villette," &c.* By E. C. Gaskell, Author of "Mary Barton," "Ruth," &c. 2 vols. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1857.

*Jane Eyre. An Autobiography.* By Currer Bell, Author of "Shirley," "Villette," &c. Fifth Edition. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1855.

*Shirley. A Tale.* By Currer Bell, Author of "Jane Eyre." London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1852.

*Villette.* By Currer Bell, Author of "Jane Eyre," "Shirley," &c. A new Edition. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1855.

*The Professor. A Tale.* By Currer Bell, Author of "Jane Eyre," "Shirley," "Villette," &c. 2 vols. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1857.

*Wuthering Heights, and Agnes Grey.* By Ellis and Acton Bell. A new Edition, revised; with a Biographical Notice of the Authors. A Selection from their Literary Remains, and a Preface. By Currer Bell. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1851.

*The Tenant of Wildfell Hall.* By Acton Bell. Hodgson.

*Poems.* By Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell. London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1846.

FRIENDS and friendly biographers are apt to ask too much from "the public," and from the critic who expresses an individual atom of public judgment. There is such a thing as being unjust to the judges. It is unjust to require of readers—all of whom more or less form opinions on an author—that the personal qualities of the writer, unblemished purity of life, exalted heroism, or heroic self-denial, should blind them to errors of style or dulness of story. It is constantly urged, more or less directly, that Smith must write sense because he supports an aged mother, and Amelia be true to nature because all her friends love her so much; and when these claims are ignored, there is irritation and outcry. "It is well," Mrs. Gaskell writes, "that the thoughtless critics, who spoke of the sad and gloomy views of life presented by the Brontes in their tales, should know how such words

were wrung out of them by the living recollection of the long agony they suffered." Why thoughtless critics? They had penetration enough, it seems, to point out a leading feature in the books; and they must have been more than thoughtful to penetrate the secret domestic sorrows of the family and take them into account in characterizing their written productions. A living author is known to the world by his works only, or, if not so it is with his works alone the public are concerned; and he has no cause of complaint if he is fairly judged by them without any allowance for the private conditions under which they were produced. On the other hand, he has the corresponding right to demand that personal considerations and private information shall not be dragged in as elements of literary judgment, and that his publicity as an artist shall give no pretext for invading the seclusion of his private life. While we disregard the weak and unfounded complaints we so often hear of "unsympathizing" criticism, we must all allow that no terms of reprobation are too strong for forced and unwarrantable intrusions into the personal sanctuary. When an author is dead and his biography is written, especially what may be called a private biography as distinguished from a simple record of public actions, some of the restrictions never justly infringed during the lifetime are removed. The sphere which is voluntarily opened to the public measures the range of the critic. By the very act of admitting us to the interior of a life and character we are invited to examine it; and if such a biography is to have any value, opinions on it must be freely formed and freely expressed.

In writing the life of the late Mrs. Nicholls, Mrs. Gaskell had more than ordinary difficulties to contend with. She had to depict an existence whose interest consisted in the singular characteristics of the narrow home in which it passed, in the spectacle of genius contending against circumstance, not on the wide stage of the world, but within the walls of one household, in energy struggling not against the

outward blows of fate, but against the trials of the heart, and still more against isolation and repression. So narrow was the stage, so few the actors, that it was impossible to illuminate one without letting in the light on others who stood closely grouped around the central figure, and without laying bare to the public eye the closest, and by all men most zealously guarded, secrets of domestic life. The biographer who has to deal with such a life must choose between a mode of treatment which reduces his field to the limits of a memoir, and scarcely allows him to do justice to his task, or one which, on the other hand, is sure in its wider scope to do some injury to the rights and susceptibilities of others. Mrs. Gaskell made her choice, and has unflinchingly acted upon it. In the warmth of her admiration for her friend, in her determination to interest the public in her conscientious self-denying character and her joyless life, she has let no considerations interfere with her purpose of presenting her subject in all the detail necessary to its complete appreciation, and with all that force of graphic delineation of which she is so great a master. Frankly we will state our conviction, that she was mistaken; that the principles and the practice which in England make it indecorous to withdraw the veil from purely domestic affairs,—the joys, the griefs, the shames of the household,—have a true basis in fortitude and delicacy of feeling, and are paramount to considerations of gratifying public curiosity, or even to that of securing a full appreciation for the private character of a distinguished artist. Don't let us deceive ourselves about the moral lesson in the present case; it is either so exceptional as to have no common application, or it is one which all who wish may gather for themselves within the range of their own family experience. And let us remember, too, that, without pressing real domestic events into the service, we have in our modern novels sufficient scope for supplying that pleasurable excitement of our better feelings, now so common a luxury, and which is in danger with many of us of replacing the effort to find them a field for their actual exercise.

After this protest, we are free to echo the universal opinion as to the skill with which a difficult work has been executed, and an absorbing interest given to the narrative;

rather, we should say, to the felicity with which its native elements of interest have been marshalled and arrayed. The writer, indeed, has gently evaded the responsibility of giving us her own conception of the characters she is describing; this, perhaps, is a thing we have no right to demand of her, but it would have added much to the value of her work to have had a clear view of the impression produced by the whole of Miss Bronte's character on any mind which had had opportunities of studying her intimately. This is the simplest, the most trustworthy, almost the only way in which we can gain any adequate comprehension of a nature which we have not known at first hand. But Mrs. Gaskell neither loves to form a judgment herself, nor is she very willing that others should do so. She admits the right of divergence of opinion, but is almost as sensitive to the exercise of it as Miss Bronte herself; not to echo her own enthusiasm is an unfailing mark of superficial insight and shallow thought. She has a tendency to hector us all, in a lady-like way, into unqualified admiration; and when very angry, she whips the critics severely with her pocket-handkerchief. What she stigmatizes as want of sympathy, excites her bitterness. She prefers the Transatlantic school of criticism, and thinks praise cannot be too like Devonshire cream. She approves the American clergyman, whose tribute, however, seems to us more difficult of digestion than any censure, however harsh and undeserved. "We have," writes the reverend gentleman,—“we have in our sacred of sacreds a special shelf, highly adorned, as a place we delight to honor, of novels which we recognize as having had a good influence on character—our character. Foremost is ‘Jane Eyre.’”

With all its excellencies, and they are many, her book has a trace of the cant of panegyricism. It is a very different description from that which Charlotte Bronte herself would have written under under similar circumstances,—very dissimilar from those brief, unspoken, truthful sentences in which she characterizes her sisters in the short and eloquent tribute she has paid to their memory. Charlotte Bronte's character could have borne a thoroughly open and honest picture of what defects it had, and borne it better than it can bear one or two slight, and

almost friendly hints, such as that of "slight astringencies" of character in the lady-novelist, sentences written concerning her married life.

These are shortcomings, no doubt, yet the completeness of the work in other respects goes far to compensate us for them; whatever can be derived from sequence of events, external description and such indications of personal character as letters afford, is furnished in the fullest abundance. The biographer's command of language, and her talent of description, at once powerful and delicate, enable her to depict with wondrous vividness the scenes in which this painful and secluded drama of life was presented, and the conditions under which it was played out to its melancholy close. Sadly and strangely the story reads, from the time when the motherless and little less than fatherless children sit self-companioned in the gloomy candleless kitchen, or return with wet and weary feet to a smell only of dry boots,\* to that when the last of them, after a life deeply scarred with those sharp struggles of which the heart is the arena, parted at last with a cry of reluctance from a brief spell of happy days. It is not keen and protracted suffering, or great calamities, which give its sorrowful character to this family history,—though of these too it embraced its full share; but there is a sunlessness, a gray shadow over the house, from the pressure of which none of its members seem to escape even for a moment. Nothing happy, genial, or expansive gilds their brief day; joy rarely, if ever, comes to elevate them; and grief has no power to strike them down, it can only crush them lower. How far the temperament, common under varied aspects to the three sisters, was due to the circumstances of their life, or how far to peculiarities of nature and race, it is impossible to determine. They seem curious offspring of the eccentric, strong-willed Irish father, and the simple, mild, Cornish mother. It is as if the churchyard-air they breathed, and the strong cold breezes from the moor, had entered into their very nature, and made them what they were. Yet they were clearly not children of the soil; the glowing embers that lay but half smothered at the bottom of the character of two at least of them, had in it more of the Southern and Celtic element than of the Northman's opener clearer fire. Half Eng-

land now has formed an idea of Yorkshire on what these sisters have written; yet we doubt if they ever understood the north-country character. They studied its exceptional aspects, and familiarity with its external traits enabled them to give life-like costumes to their pictures; but their narrow and secluded natures had neither the range nor the opportunity to grasp the broader characteristics of the people among whom they lived, and the north country has received considerable injustice at their hands. They described one or two mere general characteristics, such as "the contrast of rough nature with highly artificial cultivation," and they delineated fully a confined set of very special characters. But all Yorkshiremen are not Helstones, Yorkes, Crimsworths, or Hunsdens. The timid lady who, after a perusal of some of the Brontë novels, declared she would rather visit the Red Indians than trust herself in Leeds society, may be reassured. Rude the North is perhaps, and and keen and over-engrossed in personal objects, far-sighted rather than wide-ranging in vision, and sagacious rather than wise; in the manufacturing districts especially there is much that is repulsive in coarseness of manners and greed of wealth, or rather in a sort of obtrusive self-satisfaction in these defects: but it is not true that, either in East Lancashire or Yorkshire, pity is an extinct passion, nor that the great mass of the men are selfish in heart, bull-dogs in temper, and bores in demeanor. Whatever the outside may be, at bottom the poet's saying may be trusted, that

"Dark and true and tender is the North."

The close shadow of the Brontë's churchyard-home, the bitter winds, and the wild dark aspect of their moors, have left the mark of their influence upon the writings as well as upon the characters of the sisters. They want softness, variety, beauty; they are too often dark, hopeless, and discomfortable: on the other hand, they are vigorous and fresh, and bear welcome traces of Nature's close companionship with the minds from which they sprang. A personal impress is strongly marked on them. It is curious that, though the writers all had strong imaginations, not one of them had the power to get rid for a moment of her own individuality. It permeates with its subtle presence every page they write. They

were not engaging persons; and they felt that they were not—felt it acutely, and made others unduly sensible of it. Nor did they care to see others in their more agreeable and engaging aspects. They had been brought into close contact with the darker shades of character, and they instinctively studied them and reproduced them; too often they used light to give a greater depth to shadow, rather than shadow to set off light. It is in Emily's works, as in her own nature, that the darkness lies deepest. None of them are at home in sunny weather; but Emily has drawn mid-winter and thunderous skies. The clouds are ragged and dreadful, illumined for short glimpses by tempest fire:

"Storm and hail and thunder,  
And the winds that rave,"

are the material correspondents of those dread perturbations of the human spirit in which she found herself at home. Her temperament was a strange, even a distorted one. There must have been a fund of ferocity in her own nature strangely mingled with tenderness. "Stronger than a man, simpler than a child, her whole nature stood alone." So says her sister. She could not tolerate the contact of other wills. Isolation became a necessary of her life; she could not endure her reserve to be infringed, and the demonstrations at least of her affection were reserved for the dumb creation. One who knew her, said of her, "She never showed regard to any human creature; all her love was reserved for animals." In her last illness, her sisters dared neither question nor assist her. As her body sank, her will seemed to get stronger. To the very gate of death she walked alone, not from necessity but from choice, rejecting all aid from medicine, refusing the sympathies that hung so tenderly around her, and compelling her wasted frame to continue independent of all assistance from others. "The awful point," says Charlotte, "was, that while full of ruth for others, on herself she had no pity; the spirit was inexorable to the flesh; from the trembling hand, the unnerved limbs, the faded eyes, the same service was exacted as they had rendered in health. To stand by and witness this, and not dare to remonstrate was a pain no words can render." A less degree of this sort of Stoicism and self-immolation is not uncommon in people of strong wills; but except in youth, before we have

learnt the value of even the meanest of us to other hearts, it is not in general compatible with strong affections. Persons gifted with these soon learn to appreciate the truth, that to be cruel to oneself is often to be yet more cruel to others; and that self-indulgence, paradoxical as it seems, may sometimes conceal itself under the guise of self-sacrifice. But Emily was young; and all the sisters seem to have been united by ties of deep and fervent, even passionate affection. Yet they all had that unhappy gift of feelings strong out of all proportion to their power of bringing them to the surface. If those who express habitually more than they feel deserve contempt, those deserve pity who can give no utterance to what they do feel, and most unwise are they who wittingly hide away in the recesses of their hearts riches which were meant to be freely spent for the welfare of themselves and others. Their treasure is like the buried gold of the miser, it is stored up apart from its true uses. It yields no interest of happiness or joy; yet if it be seized away, the agony of loss is not the less bitter. It is a mistake to suppose that affections are the more powerful for being concealed. Like other great gifts, they rust unused, and their true use is to let them flow forth easily and freely. It is on the evidences of affection the heart feeds; and he who drinks of other springs, and gathers his own in a deep well, must look closely to it lest the waters stagnate. Concentrated on few objects, love may become more strong; but the more it is concentrated, the closer it approaches to self-love. How mere a self-love it may become, how mere a passionate wilful surrender to native instincts, has no where received a more vivid and terrible artistic delineation than in Emily Brontë's tale of *Wuthering Heights*. In force of genius, in the power of conceiving and uttering intensity of passion, Emily surpassed her sister Charlotte. On the other hand, her range seems to have been still more confined. The atmosphere of the book obscures the elements of character and incident; it is like gazing on a storm which melts together and shrouds in rain and gloom all the distinctive features of the landscape. It is idle to deny that the book is revolting. That a wickedness, whose only claim to attention is its intensity, that the most frightful excesses of degrading vices, snarling hypocrisy, an almost idiotic imbe-



cility of mind and body, combined with a cruel and utterly selfish nature—that these things should not excite abhorrence is impossible; and they occupy so large a space in the book, they seemed displayed so much for their own sake, that it is impossible the whole work should not obtain a share of the sentiment. We may admire, but not without horror, the stern, unflinching hand with which the author drives her keen plough through the worst recesses of the human heart, nothing surprised at what she finds there, nothing concerned at what she uproots accepting everything as the simple bent of nature, referring to no higher standard, and letting no sign escape her either of approval or condemnation. Unsparring vindictiveness and savage brutality are depicted in all their native deformity. Art throws aside her prerogative to dwell on beautiful and hint at hideous things, and lays bare to day the base actualities of coarse natures and degraded lives. The way in which the imagination of the author is imbued with the fierce uncontrolled tone of the work is shown remarkably in its overriding essential probabilities, as, for instance, in the way in which Isabella Linton's and the younger Catherine's temper and character become so immediately assimilated in coarseness and malice to those of Heathcliff's household. We dare not question Charlotte Brontë's judgment, when she says of her sisters that they were "genuinely good and truly great." How the will and the life may have moulded the character, we are not competent to discern; and therefore we do not say that in the character, but that in the original temperament of Emily, there must have been some strange sympathy with the fierce natures she revels in delineating. We cannot help shrinking from a mind which could conceive and describe, even as occurring in a dream, the rubbing backwards and forwards of a child's hand along the jagged glass in a broken window-pane till the blood flowed down upon the bed. "Having formed these beings," says Charlotte, "she did not know what she had done. If the auditor of her work, when read in manuscript, shuddered under the grinding influence of natures so relentless and implacable, of spirits so lost and fallen; if it was complained that the mere hearing of certain vivid and fearful scenes banished sleep by night, and disturbed mental peace by day,—

Ellis Bell would wonder what was meant, and suspect the complainant of affectation."

Her sister goes on to prophesy that the matured fruits of her mind would have thrown into the shade this early and immature production. But we doubt it. We doubt, at least, whether she could ever have taken any very high place in dramatic literature. In *Wuthering Heights* there is an unmistakable tendency to subordinate differences of character to vividness of narration. Rather, we should say, perhaps it shows the absence of any power of intuitive insight into characters widely differing from one another and from the author. All the characters described in the book are within a very narrow range, and have a tendency to run into one another. Yet the whole story embodies a wonderful effort of imagination. It is not painted in detail from observation or reflection, but caught up, as it were, into the highest heaven of imagination, and flung out from thence into the world, with scornful indifference to the restrictions of Art and the judgment of men. All is fused together as by fire; and the reader has neither power nor inclination to weigh probabilities or discuss defects. He shudders as he reads, and feels as one may imagine a modern Englishman would feel in gazing at the gladiatorial shows of ancient Rome; but the laceration of his feelings deadens him to the bearings of details. There is humor in Joseph, rude and harsh though it be; a quality not discernible in any of the other writings of the sisters (we do not except the curate scene); and once, though once only, Heathcliff shows in such a light that it is possible for pity to mingle with our detestation. It is when, after Catherine's death, he stands on his hearth-stone, his passion spent, and his spirit overwhelmed by the sense of his desolation.

"Heathcliff did not glance my way; and I gazed up, and contemplated his features almost as confidently as if they had been turned to stone. His forehead, that I once thought so manly, and that I now think so diabolical, was shaded with a heavy cloud; his basilisk eyes were nearly quenched by sleeplessness, and weeping, perhaps, for the lashes were wet then; his lips devoid of their ferocious sneer, and sealed in an expression of unspeakable sadness.

"Mr. Earnshaw looked up, like me, to the countenance of our usual foe; who, absorbed

in his anguish, seemed insensible to any thing around him. The longer he stood, the plainer his reflections revealed their blackness through his features.

"O, if God would but give me strength to strangle him in my last agony, I'd go to hell with joy," groaned the impatient man, writhing to rise, and sinking back in despair, convinced of his inadequacy for the struggle.

"Nay, it's enough that he has murdered one of you," I observed aloud. "At the Grange, every one knows your sister would have been living now had it not been for Mr. Heathcliff. After all, it is preferable to be hated than loved by him. When I recollect how happy we were—how happy Catherine was before he came—I'm fit to curse the day."

"Most likely, Heathcliff noticed more the truth of what was said than the spirit of the person who said it. His attention was roused, I saw, for his eyes rained down tears among the ashes, and he drew his breath in suffocating sighs. I stared full at him, and laughed scornfully. The clouded windows of hell flashed a moment towards me; the fiend which usually looked out, however, was so dimmed and drowned, that I did not fear to hazard another sound of derision."

"The clouded windows of hell flashed a moment towards me!" What a wealth of tragic utterance there is in the phrase! Entirely out of place, indeed, in the mouth by which it is uttered, as is the whole of this description; but in true keeping with the strain which underlies the whole wild harmony. Never, perhaps, has unbridled ferocity and unassuageable vindictiveness found so adequate a delineator as in this young girl. If her book have any moral, it serves, as we before observed, to show how fierce, how inhuman a passion, personal attachment to another may become, and how reckless of the welfare of its object; and this, too, not the love which sinks from the human level into the sensual appetite of the brutes, but the pure love of souls. For such is the passion of Heathcliff and Catherine. The life-like presentation of how such a love may be compatible with selfishness utterly unredeemed is, if not the conscious teaching of the author, yet the prominent lesson of her rude titanic story, "rich with barbaric gems and crusted gold." The only other evidence Emily Bronte has left of her remarkable genius, is to be found in her few short poems, for which Charlotte justly claimed an appreciation they have never ob-

tained. They show a scarcely less forcible and a finer side of her nature than *Wuthering Heights*. They want the finish of an accomplished writer; but they have a true music of their own answering to the sense. It is rarely, indeed, that poetry written early in life stands so independent as does this of any trace of the influence of other minds. But here the writer has looked with her own eyes on nature and into her own heart (rarely, if ever, beyond these two), and with genuine simplicity and native vigor her poet's instinct gives a voice to what she has seen and experienced. The life in her imaginary world seems with her to have become positively more present and real than the outward daily world which surrounded her. To her unaccompanied spirit imagination was a refuge, a comfort, almost a deity.

"O, thy bright eyes must answer now,  
When Reason, with a scornful brow,  
Is mocking at my overthrow!  
O, thy sweet tongue must plead for me,  
And tell why I have chosen thee!

Stern Reason is to judgment come,  
Arrayed in all her forms of gloom;  
Wilt thou, my advocate, be dumb?  
No, radiant angel, speak and say,  
Why I did cast the world away.

Why I have persevered to shun  
The common paths that others run,  
And on a strange road journeyed on,  
Heedless alike of wealth and power—  
Of glory's wreath and pleasure's flower.

These once, indeed, seemed beings divine;  
And they, perchance, heard vows of mine,  
And saw my offerings on their shrine:  
But careless gifts are seldom prized,  
And mine were worthily despised.

So, with a ready heart I swore  
To seek their altar-stone no more;  
And gave my spirit to adore  
Thee, ever-present phantom thing,  
My slave, my comrade, and my king.

A slave, because I rule thee still;  
Incline thee to my changeful will,  
And make thy influence good or ill:  
A comrade, for by day and night  
Thou art my infinite delight,—

My darling pain that wounds and sears,  
And wrings a blessing out from tears  
By deadening me to earthly cares:  
And yet a king, though Prudence well  
Have taught thy subject to rebel.

And am I wrong to worship, where  
Faith cannot doubt, nor hope despair,  
Since my own soul can grant my prayer?  
Speak, God of visions, plead for me,  
And tell why I have chosen thee!"

The following lines breathe a softer influence than most of the poetry. Wordsworth himself might have acknowledged them

"Often rebuked, yet always back returning  
To those first feelings that were born with me,  
And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning  
For idle dreams of things which cannot be:

To-day I will seek not the shadowy region,  
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;  
And visions rising, legion after legion,  
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,  
And not in paths of high morality,  
And not among the half-distinguished faces,  
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading:

It vexes me to choose another guide:  
Where the gray flocks in ferny glens are feeding,  
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain-side.

What have those lonely mountains worth revealing?

More glory and more grief than I can tell:  
The earth, that wakes our human heart to feeling,

Can centre both the worlds of Heaven and Hell."

"Liberty," says Charlotte, "was the breath of Emily's nostrils;" and there are some verses, christened "The Old Stoic;" which give expression to this deep-seated impatience of restraint which lay so near the heart of the young Stoic who wrote them:

"Riches I hold in light esteem;  
And Love I laugh to scorn;  
And lust of fame was but a dream  
That vanished with the morn:

And if I pray, the only prayer  
That moves my lips for me  
Is, 'Leave the heart that now I bear,  
And give me liberty!'

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,  
'Tis all that I implore;  
In life and death, a chainless soul,  
With courage to endure."

There is something fine in her free undaunted spirit, her hidden tenderness, her passionate love of Nature and of home, her genius and her unconquerable fortitude. She died young, snatched away by rapid decline; and though we, who are strange to her, look on her with a sort of compelled and fearful admiration, there were passionate tears shed over her by those who associated with her in every-day life. In less than an-

other six months the youngest sister, Anne, followed Emily to the grave. Her death was in as marked contrast to that of her sister as her character had been. If it be proper at all to withdraw the veil from these sad privacies of domestic life, and carry us with so much minute detail into the chamber of death, we must own that, in the present instance, it has been done with all delicacy and respect. It is a calm and tender scene, in which the pious spirit gently and patiently, and filled to the last with affectionate thoughtfulness for those she was leaving, unmoors from the shores of life and fades into the unknown sea. Anne must have had much of her Cornish mother in her: Concerning the latter, Mrs. Gaskell has been able to gather a few picturesque details, and portrays her with a sort of soft melancholy interest in our eyes. Like her, Anne was "meek and retiring, while possessing more than ordinary talents; and her piety was genuine and unobtrusive." Though gentle, she was not weak; she possessed her full share of that independence of external support which distinguished all the sisters, and her share too of their constitutional reserve. But she had an unaffected humility, and lived more in purposes entirely apart from herself than either of the others. Charlotte speaks of her life as having been passed under the tyranny of a too tender conscience, and of her religious feeling as partaking in a milder form of the sad hallucinations of Cowper. The former we can well understand; but neither her writings, nor the occasional glimpses of her life which we obtain, seem to warrant the idea that she suffered in any degree from the disease of religious melancholy. Indeed, her sister probably scarcely meant us to infer so much as this. *Agnes Grey* reflects so accurately all we hear of her, that we can scarcely be wrong in supposing it shadows forth her character as well as a part of her experiences. Without wishing to seem paradoxical, we cannot help thinking that Anne had more of the artist's faculties than either of her sisters. Her stories are much more homogeneous in their structure, her characters more consistent, and, though less original and striking, conducted with a nicer perception of dramatic propriety. Grimshy, Hattersley, and Lord Lowborough—unfilled outlines as they are—are more of real men

than Heathcliff, Rochester, or Dr. John. The revolting scenes in *Wildfell Hall* were drawn, in despite of a natural reluctance for the task, from a sense of the duty of sparing no blackening touch in the picture of an odious vice; a mistaken duty we think it (for these gross pictures of excess cannot touch those whom alone they are adapted to benefit), but in the discharge of which the writer has displayed no common powers both of insight and delineation. The hero spoils the book. Anne meant him to be a gentleman; but she was ignorant of the manners and demeanor of a gentleman, and she has given us instead a truculent ill-bred young farmer, with strong feelings, an active mind, and a most offensively good opinion of himself. Lawrence, who is meant to be the not very strong, somewhat over-refined, reserved, fine gentleman, she is not able to draw at all. She had no materials to enable her to do so.

Charlotte Brontë, older than her two sisters, differed widely from them in character. Hers was a mind fitted to shine in society, at least as well as to write in solitude. The absolute seclusion which was to Emily a necessary, and to Anne a protection, was too often felt by Charlotte as a prison, in which the ties of affection and the claims of duty, to which none ever yielded a more loyal and unconditional obedience, alone had power to bind her. Hers was an active, eager spirit, which thirsted for knowledge and experience; which took a warm interest in the character and actions of men, and would willingly have seen them with her own eyes, and studied them from the life. Some of her letters indicate how much it cost her willingly to immure herself within the narrow sphere which Providence had assigned her; and one of her friends has recorded a conversation which shows with how much even of horror she contemplated the narrow cell-like existence before her, and with how unfaltering a will she remained true to what she deemed, and not unjustly, to be her nearest duty, that of consoling and upholding her aged father, and of sharing with the others those gloomy trials to which the misconduct of their brother subjected them.

"When last I saw Charlotte," says one of the two most intimate friends she had, "she told me she had quite decided to stay at home.

She owned she did not like it. Her health was weak. She said she should like any change at first, as she had liked Brussels at first; and she thought that there must be some possibility for some people of having a life of more variety and more communion with humankind, but she saw none for her. I told her very warmly, that she ought not to stay at home; that to spend the next five years at home, in solitude and weak health, would ruin her; that she would never recover it. Such a dark shadow came over her face when I said, 'Think of what you'll be five years hence,' that I stopped, and said, 'Don't cry, Charlotte!' She did not cry; but went on walking up and down the room, and said in a little while, 'But I intend to stay, Polly!'"

And she did stay: not only five, but ten years she spent, with only occasional brief absences, in that contracted home, soon rendered all but solitary by the swiftly repeated strokes of death; and there she died. All England is now familiar with that home; has seen, with the mind's eye at least, the plain gray-stone house, looking across the well-filled grave-yard to the ancient little church at the top of the steep hill at Haworth, with the undulating wild moors, "purple-black," above and beyond it: every one knows the little fireless room and the flagged kitchen in which the precocious little Brontës lived, unvisited by the dying mother or the eccentric father; and, trained to forego the usual vivacity of childhood, read their newspapers and invented their plays, with Wellington and Bonaparte for their *dramatis personæ*. There were six of them in these first days, before the two eldest died. These were Maria, the Helen of *Jane Eyre*, and of whom her father tells us that before the age of eleven "he could converse with her on any of the leading topics of the day with as much freedom and pleasure as with any grown-up person," and Elizabeth, of whom we only know by one little anecdote that she shared the characteristic patience and fortitude of the family.

Among these children, Charlotte was the quick and clever one. The servants thought her "sharp," and declared they must mind what they said before her; and her first school-mistress describes her as a "bright, clever, happy little girl, never in disgrace." One of her schoolfellows furnishes a likeness of her at the age of thirteen, which is



graphic enough in other respects, and contains one fact specially characteristic:

"I first saw her coming out of a covered cart, in very old-fashioned clothes, and looking very cold and miserable. She was coming to school at Miss Wooler's. When she appeared in the schoolroom, her dress was changed, but just as old. She looked a little old woman, so short-sighted, that she always appeared to be seeking something, and moving her head from side to side to catch a sight of it. She was very shy and nervous, and spoke with a strong Irish accent. When a book was given her, she dropped her head over it till her nose nearly touched it; and when she was told to hold her head up, up went the book after it, still close to her nose, so that it was not possible to help laughing."

Anne took after her mother, but Charlotte after her father. The little girl "spoke with a strong Irish accent." This tells more completely than any thing else in what complete seclusion she must have lived, and that the characteristics of her father's race were prominent in her. Living all her life in Yorkshire, Mr. Brontë the only person near her of Irish blood, and associating but little with him, she yet spoke in the accent of his country. The way in which, in her child-writings, she imitates Tabby's pronunciation, seems to show that the Yorkshire dialect always sounded strange to them. But Charlotte seems to have been the most Irish among them, except perhaps Branwell. From Ireland she derived her eloquence and vehemence, and from Ireland her keen susceptibilities, both physical and mental. No common force and fire of nature lay hidden beneath her plain and fragile exterior, and gleamed through her eyes sometimes with a sudden brilliancy that startled the spectator. Mrs. Gaskell has given a good description of this feature in her face, and of the rest of her personal appearance. Her eyes

"were large and well shaped; their color a reddish brown; but if the iris was closely examined it appeared to be composed of a great variety of tints. The usual expression was of quiet, listening intelligence; but now and then on some just occasion for vivid interest or wholesome indignation, a light would shine out, as if some spiritual lamp had been kindled, which glowed behind those expressive orbs. I never saw the like in any other human creature. As for the rest of her features, they were plain, large

and ill set; but, unless you began to catalogue them, you were hardly aware of the fact, for the eyes and power of the countenance overbalanced every physical defect; the crooked mouth and the large nose were forgotten, and the whole face arrested the attention, and presently attracted all those whom she herself would have cared to attract. Her hands and feet were the smallest I ever saw; when one of the former was placed in mine, it was like the soft touch of a bird in the middle of my palm. The delicate long fingers had a peculiar fineness of sensation, which was one reason why all her handiwork, of whatever kind—writing, sewing, knitting—was so clear in its minuteness. She was remarkably neat in her whole personal attire; but she was dainty as to the fit of her shoes and gloves. I can well imagine that the grave serious composure, which, when I knew her, gave her face the dignity of an old Venetian portrait, was no acquisition of later years, but dated from that early age when she found herself in the position of an elder sister to motherless children."

We question this; at least the composure which comes after many years of bitter trial and arduous self-control is very different from the aspect under which a reserved child of thirteen hides the secret things of its heart and struggling intellect. We doubt if any of the children were unhappy, though perhaps never joyful. The house, which seemed so dreary from the outside, was warm within with mutual affection, and the close intellectual sympathies engendered by the common working of their active minds. Back to their childhood, and to that latter time when, in the dim fire-light, the sisters walked to and fro discussing their future lives, or communicating and criticising their several literary efforts, Charlotte always looked as to the sole bright gleam in her life. And none of them could leave home for a time without irrepressible yearning to return, which in Emily resulted in actual illness.

"This is Sunday morning," writes Charlotte from her *pensionnat* at Brussels; "they are at their idolatrous *messe*," and I am here, that is, in the *réfectoire*. I should like uncommonly to be in the dining-room, or in the kitchen, or in the back-kitchen. I should like even to be cutting up the hash, with the clerk and some register-people at the other table, and you standing by, watching that I put enough flour, not too much pepper, and above all, that I save the best pieces of the leg of mutton for Tiger and Keeper; the first of which personages would

be jumping about the dish and carving-knife, and the latter, standing like a devouring flame on the kitchen floor. To complete the picture—Tabby blowing the fire, in order to boil the potatoes to a sort of vegetable glue! How divine are these recollections to me at this moment!"

A few years later, when occupied as a teacher at Miss Wooler's school, she suffered much from dejection of spirits, and underwent that experience of bitter self-condemnation and black hopelessness through the sharper or more softened terrors of which almost every soul is destined to find its way to higher things.

"If I could always live with you," she writes to her friend E., "and daily read the Bible with you—if your lips and mine could at the same time drink the same draught from the same pure fountain of mercy—I hope, I trust, I might one day become better, far better than my evil wandering thoughts, my corrupt heart, cold to the spirit and warm to the flesh, will now permit me to be. I often plan the pleasant life which we might lead together, strengthening each other in that power of self-denial, that hallowed and glowing devotion, which the first saints of God often attained to. My eyes fill with tears when I contrast the bliss of such a state, brightened by hopes of the future, with the melancholy state I now live in, uncertain that I ever felt true contrition, wandering in thought and deed, and longing for holiness, which I shall *never, never* obtain, smitten at times to the heart with the conviction that ghastly Calvinistic doctrines are true—darkened, in short, by the very shadows of spiritual death. If Christian perfection be necessary to salvation, I shall never be saved; my heart is a very hot-bed for sinful thoughts, and when I decide on an action, I scarcely remember to look to my Redeemer for direction. I know not how to pray; I cannot bend my life to the grand end of doing good; I go on constantly seeking my own pleasure, pursuing the gratification of my own desires."

Her vivid intellectual interests and longings for a sphere better fitted to her capacities seem to her almost sinful. "If you knew my thoughts, the dreams that absorb me, and the fiery imagination that at times eats me up, and makes me feel society, as it is, wretchedly insipid, you would pity, and, I dare say, despise me." It is generally necessary to have some external knowledge of an author before we can trace him in his works: but once furnished with a key, it is

not difficult, in many writers, to distinguish self-revelations from pure dramatic expressions. In various parts of her works, Miss Brontë has given a voice to this impatience of seclusion, and that desire for a wider experience, which we have before mentioned as preying upon her. Jane Eyre speaks for her in this as in many things:

"Any body may blame me who likes, when I add further, that now and then, when I took a walk by myself in the grounds; when I went down to the gates and looked through them along the road; or when, while Adèle played with her nurse, and Mrs. Fairfax made jellies in the store-room, I climbed the three staircases, raised the trap-door of the attic, and having reached the leads, looked out afar over sequestered field and hill, and along the dim sky-line—that then I longed for a power of vision which might overpass that limit—which might reach the busy world, towns, regions full of life I had heard of, but never seen: that then I desired more of practical experience than I possessed; more of intercourse with my kind, of acquaintance with variety of character, than was here within my reach. I valued what was good in Mrs. Fairfax, and what was good in Adèle; but I believed in the existence of other and more vivid kinds of goodness, and what I believed in I wished to behold.

"Who blames me? Many, no doubt; and I shall be called discontented. I could not help it: the restlessness was in my nature; it agitated me to pain sometimes. Then my sole relief was to walk along the corridor of the third story, backwards and forwards, safe in the silence and solitude of the spot, and allow my mind's-eye to dwell on whatever bright visions rose before it—and, certainly, they were many and glowing: to let my heart be heaved by the exultant movement, which, while it swelled it in trouble, expanded it with life; and best of all, to open my inward ear to a tale that was never ended—a tale my imagination created, and narrated continuously; quickened with all of incident, life, fire, feeling that I desired, and had not in my actual existence."

Literature seemed to open a field for her energies, and she might have devoted herself to it earlier than she did, had not her first aspirations been quenched by the cooling, sensible reply Southey returned to a letter in which she consulted him on the subject. His answer is a perfectly good one to her letter; but it was impossible he should gather from her letter what her powers were. From the condition of shattered nerves and

broken health into which she fell thus early in life, Miss Bronte seems never to have recovered. It combined, with her long habits of secluded existence, to make any unusual effort or new excitement a severe tax upon her. Hence, later on in life, the short and scattered experiences she had of the social intercourse she was naturally so well fitted to enjoy, seem to have brought with them almost as much pain as pleasure. Her personal appearance, too, seems always to have been a sort of bugbear to her. "I notice," said she, "that after a stranger has once looked at my face, he is careful not to let his eyes wander to that part of the room again." This, a false enough apprehension, as Mrs. Gaskell assures us, joined with those other causes to give her in society an air of constraint and timidity, which it needed the vivid excitement of some strong intellectual interest to enable her to shake off. Her life makes plain, however, what warm affections and genuine kindness were concealed under a demeanor not always attractive. Old servants remember her for little kindly actions in her childhood; home affections centered in her, friendship found her loyal, and love, warm and true. "She thought much of her duty," writes a friend who knew her from childhood, "and had loftier and clearer notions of it than most people, and held fast to them with more success. It was done, it seems to me, with much more difficulty than people have of stronger nerves and better fortunes. All her life was but labor and pain; and she never threw down the burden for the sake of present pleasure." Nay, so careful was she in this respect, that an asceticism almost morbid seems sometimes to characterize her actions. She will not accept the common alleviations of her desolate condition after her two sisters' death, lest they should tend to dissatisfy her with her lot, or render her too dependent on external support. She will not seek relief in the society of her friend from the worst misery of human life, a dejection of spirits heavy almost as despair; she will not even allow herself the indulgence of a frequent correspondence. She was constitutionally destitute of hope, and though never without a just estimate of her mental powers, distrusted excessively her claim to affection and her interest in other hearts. She never leaned on others. It was her principle, that friends, and even husband

and wife, should each jealously guard some independent standing-room of his or her own. Though the reverse of exacting, she had no faculty of closing her eyes, and scrutinized with some closeness the share which each party subscribed in unions of this sort. Mrs. Gaskell bears testimony to her deficiency in hopefulness.

"In looking over the earlier portion (of her correspondence with E.), I am struck afresh by the absence of hope, which formed such a strong characteristic in Charlotte. At an age when girls, in general, look forward to an eternal duration of such feelings as they or their friends entertain, and can therefore see no hindrance to the fulfilment of any engagements dependent on the future of the affections, she is surprised that E. keeps her promise to write. In after-life, I was painfully impressed with the fact, that Miss Bronte never dared to allow herself to look forward with hope; that she had no confidence in the future; and I thought, when I heard of the sorrowful years she had passed through, that it had been this pressure of grief which had crushed all buoyancy of expectation out of her. But it appears from the letters, that it must have been, so to speak, constitutional; or, perhaps, the deep pang of losing her two elder sisters combined with a permanent state of bodily weakness in producing her hopelessness. If her trust in God had been less strong, she would have given way to unbounded anxiety at many a period of her life. As it was, we shall see, she made a great and successful effort to leave 'her times in His hands.'"

Absence of hope in her was not only a moral deficiency, but extended its influence over her intellect. She always looked at things as they were in the immediate present, without looking forward to the modifications they might undergo in the future. She never represents the growth of character, or the influence of circumstances and of the will in changing it. She accepts her own and that of others as something settled; and while displaying and advocating a rigid conformity to duty in action, she studies but little its reflex influence on the actor. Hence partly it is that she is too much disposed to accept all men's natures with a somewhat unusual tolerance. Emily, as we have before remarked, had the same tendency, though in a far greater degree; and some lines of hers express it so clearly that we are tempted to quote them, though we have already perhaps indulged ourselves sufficiently in this matter.

But Emily Brontë's poetry is little known, and always worth reading :

*Stanzas to ———.*

" Well, some may hate, and some may scorn,  
And some may quite forget thy name;  
But my sad heart must ever mourn  
Thy ruined hopes, thy blighted fame!  
'Twas thus I thought, an hour ago,  
Even weeping o'er that wretch's woe;  
One word turned back my gushing tears,  
And lit my altered eye with sneers.  
Then ' Bless the friendly dust,' I said,  
' That hides thy unlamented head?  
Vain as thou wert, and weak as vain,  
The slave of Falsehood, Pride, and Pain,—  
My heart has naught akin to thine;  
Thy soul is powerless over mine.'

But these were thoughts that vanished too;  
Unwise, unholy, and untrue:  
Do I despise the timid deer,  
Because his limbs are fleet with fear?  
Or, would I mock the wolf's death-howl,  
Because his form is gaunt and foul?  
Or hear with joy the leveret's cry,  
Because it cannot bravely die?  
No! Then above his memory  
Let Pity's heart as tender be;  
Say, ' Earth lie lightly on that breast,  
And, kind Heaven, grant that spirit rest! '"

Strong as was her fancy, Miss Brontë's was and eminently practical mind. She seemed to have the power of reserving her imaginative faculties for a sphere of their own, and excluded them almost too entirely from the domain of actual life. Though her limited experience of the world may have betrayed her into some blunders, they were wonderfully few—a sound practical judgment distinguishes her: her letters to her publishers are perfectly business-like, clear, succinct, and direct to the purpose. She has the whip-hand of her genius, and compels it to go in harness and draw to a purpose. When the *Professor* was declined for want of "startling incident" and "thrilling excitement," she sat down there and then to write a book which should be more to the public taste. Her object was to find not "fit audience though few," but a purchasing publisher and a reading public; and she went straight to her object. If she thus wrote worse than she might have done had she been more independent, the fault was not hers, but that of her necessities and of the public taste. Since literature has become a lucrative profession, it necessarily shares the disadvantages of that position. To reach—even to aim—at his own highest

idea, an artist must be untrammelled by the opinion of the day, and he must have the self-denial, scarcely human, to see others placed on the highest pinnacle of popular applause, where he knows he might sit if he would, and bide his own time on a lower elevation. He who writes, or paints, or carves for bread or profit must secure, as the first condition of his object, the public ear. In time he may come to command it; and then is his time to scorn the patronage of critics and circulating libraries, and be true to his highest promptings. Unfortunately, in almost every case his servitude has unfitted him for freedom; his lofty desires have faded; his eye is dimmed; mist hides even the blue heavens; his ears are dull to catch the fine aerial harmonies, and his cramped wing refuses to sustain him in the clearer, loftier air. One great reason of the surpassing excellence which almost always distinguishes the early stages of a new growth of Art—one thing which, in literature, has helped to make Dante and Shakspeare and Goethe so noble in their freedom, is the absence of those fine silken bands of public opinion, which, scarcely visible, and all but unfelt by the artist, yet hamper him with a closer constriction than iron links of external tyranny. Enthralled, in some degree, as the professional writer necessarily is, he is, however, in any case, bound not to sacrifice principles or truth; to bow, as little as he can, to a false popular taste, and to do all in his power to elevate it. And no one, we think, can accuse Miss Brontë of failing in these respects. She used her high powers under a full sense of the responsibility they entailed. She was true to the main bent of her genius; and neither adverse criticism, to which she was keenly, even unduly, sensitive, nor the desire for applause, could induce her to quit that rugged pathway, for which she felt she was adapted, for smoother and more flowery fields of Art. In one of her letters, mentioning the pain it had given her to hear a lady whom she respected speak of *Jane Eyre* as a "wicked book," on the authority of the *Quarterly*, she continues:

"No matter, whether known or unknown, misjudged, or the contrary, I am resolved not to write otherwise. I shall bend as my powers tend. The two human beings who understood me, and whom I understood, are



gone: I have some that love me yet and whom I love, without expecting, or having a right to expect, that they shall perfectly understand me. I am satisfied; but I must have my own way in the matter of writing. The loss of what we possess nearest and dearest to us in this world, produces an effect upon the character; we search out what we have yet left that can support, and when found we cling to it with a hold of new-strung tenacity. The faculty of imagination lifted me when I was sinking, three months ago; its active exercise has kept my head above water since; its results cheer me now, for I feel they have enabled me to give pleasure to others. I am thankful to God who gave me the faculty; and it is for me a part of my religion to defend this gift, and to profit by its possession."

Her judgment was instinctive sense, however, rather than a power of deducing correct conclusions. She had no taste for abstract thought; observation and imagination absorbed her intellectual activity. You never find her pursuing trains of thought, or deriving conclusions from a process of reasoning. Politics, social reforms, the various questions of the day, on which most active minds form an opinion, may have interested her, but they did not form the subjects of her thoughts. She meddled little or not at all with matters that require a solution; but she treasured experience in whatever form it came; and her notes on life and criticisms on books are always worth listening to; often penetrating and profound. We can give no better proof of this than by quoting some remarks of hers in a letter to Mr. Williams, and one or two of her scattered criticisms on well-known books:

"In the matter of friendship, I have observed that disappointment here arises chiefly, *not* from liking our friends too well, or thinking of them too highly, but rather from an over-estimate of *their* liking for and opinion of *us*; and that if we guard ourselves with sufficient scrupulousness of care from error in this direction, and can be content, and even happy to give more affection than we receive—can make just comparison of circumstances, and be severely accurate in drawing inferences thence, and never let self-love blind our eyes, I think we may manage to get through life with consistency and constancy, unembittered by that misanthropy which springs from revulsions of feeling. All this sounds a little metaphysical, but it is good sense if you consider it. The moral of it is, that if we would build on a sure

foundation in friendship, we must love our friends for *their* sakes rather than for *our own*; we must look at their truth to *themselves*, full as much as their truth to *us*. In the latter case, every wound to self-love would be a cause of coldness; in the former, only some painful change in the friend's character and disposition, some fearful breach in his allegiance to his better self, could alienate the heart."

"I have read the *Saints' Tragedy*. As a 'work of art' it seems to me far superior to either *Alton Locke* or *Yeast*. Faulty it may be, crude and unequal, yet there are portions where some of the deep chords of human nature are swept with a hand which is strong even while it falters. We see throughout (I think) that Elizabeth has not, and never had, a mind perfectly sane. From the time that she was what she herself, in the exag-geration of her humility, calls 'an idiot girl,' to the hour when she lay moaning in visions on her dying bed, a slight craze runs through her whole existence. This is good; this is true. A sound mind, a healthy intellect, would have dashed the priest-power to the wall; would have defended her natural affections from his grasp, as a lioness defends her young; would have been as true to husband and children, as your leal-hearted little Maggie was to her Frank. Only a mind weak with some fatal flaw *could* have been influenced as was this poor saint's. But what anguish, what struggles! Seldom do I cry over books; but here my eyes rained as I read. When Elizabeth turns her face to the wall—I stopped—there needed no more.

"Deep truths are touched on in this tragedy—touched on, not fully elicited; truths that stir a peculiar pity—a compassion hot with wrath and bitter with pain. This is no poet's dream; we know that such things *have* been done; that minds *have* been thus subjugated, and lives thus laid waste."

Of Mill's article in the *Westminster*, on the Emancipation of Women, she says:

"Well-argued it is—clear, logical—but vast is the hiatus of omission; harsh the consequent jar on every finer chord of the soul. What is this hiatus? I think I know; and, knowing, I will venture to say. I think the writer forgets there is such a thing as self-sacrificing love and disinterested devotion. When I first read the paper, I thought it was the work of a powerful-minded, clear-headed woman, who had a hard, jealous heart, muscles of iron, and nerves of bend leather; of a woman who longed for power, and had never felt affection. To many women affection is sweet, and power conquered indifferent; though we all like influence won. I believe J. S. Mill would make a hard, dry,

dismal world of it; and yet he speaks admirable sense through a great portion of his article, especially when he says, that if there be a natural unfitness in women for men's employment, there is no need to make laws on the subject; leave all careers open; let them try; those who ought to succeed will succeed, or, at least, will have a fair chance; the incapable will fall back into their right place. He likewise disposes of the 'maternity' question very neatly. In short, J. S. Mill's head is, I dare say, very good, but I feel disposed to scorn his heart. You are right when you say that there is a large margin in human nature over which the logicians have no dominion; glad am I that it is so."

The union of strong imagination and strong love of living realities is the characteristic of her genius. It is she, however, who compels them together, and never permits the former faculty to work except upon a basis of close observation. Her method is the reverse of that of most writers, and does much to give to her works their great originality of style. Most writers draw upon imagination for their general conception both of character and incident, resting merely on a suggestion of fact and work up their details from observation. Thackeray does so, Dickens does so; all great painters of manners necessarily do so. But Miss Brontë is no painter of manners, or of social conditions. Her creations inhabit an exceptional world of their own. She takes her characters and her main field of incident from the world of reality, and furnishes the filling-up from imagination. The phrase she and her sisters used for the creative workings of their young minds shows the bent of their genius. They called it "making out." They took favorite heroes and starting points of historical fact, and "made out" sequels to them; and they pondered on them till the imagined part seemed as real, or more so, than the rest. From her earliest years Charlotte was accustomed to exercise her gifts. She not only dreamed, as so many children do, but wrote down her dreams, and gave them defined, artistic forms in tales and poems. The children had a *Little Magazine* of their own; they had standing plays to which all contributed, and other esoteric, or "best" plays confined to two. "Best plays near secret plays—they are very nice ones;" so Charlotte informs us. She made a list, in 1830, of her works written up to that time;

and a curious collection of fanciful and poetical titles it presents. Wellington is always the prominent hero. We have, "The strange Incident in the Duke of Wellington's Life;" "The Duke of Wellington's Adventure in the Cavern;" "The Marquis of Douro and Lord Charles Wellesley's Tale to the little King and Queens," &c. More purely imaginative are, "The Adventures of Edward de Crack;" and poems, such as "On seeing the Ruins of the Tower of Babel;" "The Lay of the Glass Town;" "Interior of a Pot-house: a Poem;" &c., &c.

Mrs. Gaskell quotes a specimen of Charlotte's early style. It does not contain the poetical picture of the approach of the winds which she finds there; but it is a very graphic piece of narrative, at once old-fashioned and simple, and shows in all the children a remarkable familiarity with some of the leading names of the day. We cannot help thinking, however, that little Anne, who was then not eight, as Mrs. Gaskell says, but six years old, must have had her heroes suggested to her.

"June the 31st, 1829.—The play of the *Islanders* was formed in December 1827, in the following manner. One night, about the time when the cold sleet and stormy fogs of November are succeeded by the snow-storms and high piercing night-winds of confirmed winter, we were sitting round the warm blazing kitchen fire, having just concluded a quarrel with Tabby concerning the propriety of lighting a candle, from which she came off victorious, no candle having been produced. A long pause succeeded, which was at last broken by Branwell, saying in a lazy manner, 'I don't know what to do.' This was echoed by Emily and Anne.

"Tabby. 'Wha ya may go t' bed.'

"Branwell. 'I'd rather do anything than that.'

"Charlotte. 'Why are you so glum to-night, Tabby? O! suppose we had each an island of our own.'

"Branwell. 'If we had, I would choose the Island of Man.'

"Charlotte. 'And I would choose the Isle of Wight.'

"Emily. 'The Isle of Arran for me.'

"Anne. 'And mine should be Guernsey.'

"We then chose who should be chief men in our islands. Branwell chose John Bull, Astley Cooper and Leigh Hunt; Emily, Walter Scott, Mr. Lockhart, Johnny Lockhart; Anne, Michael Sadler, Lord Bentinck, Sir Henry Halford. I chose the Duke of

Wellington and two sons, Christopher North and Co., and Mr. Abernethy. Here our conversation was interrupted by the, to us, dismal sound of the clock striking seven, and we were summoned off to bed. The next day we added many others to our list of men, till we got almost all the chief men of the kingdom. After this, for a long time, nothing worth noticing occurred. In June 1828, we erected a school on a fictitious island, which was to contain 1,000 children. The manner of the building was as follows. The island was fifty miles in circumference, and certainly appeared more like the work of enchantment than any thing real," &c.

The extraordinary feature in these literary productions, however, is the amount of them. The list of Charlotte's works consists of twenty-two of her own volumes, which, taking Mrs. Gaskell's facsimile as about an average page and she says it is a small one, we have computed would contain above seven thousand five hundred octavo pages such as those in the *Life of Charlotte Brontë*, or twenty-five such volumes of three hundred pages each. An allowance must be made for the poetry; but by far the greater part of this seems to have been written in seven months, and the whole of it within eighteen! Mrs. Gaskell may have over-estimated the size of the little volumes; but with every allowance the amount is enormous. It is this power of "making out"—the intense vividness with which she summoned up her creations before her own eyes—that gives their enthralling air of actual fact to her narrations. The events *were* so and so to her; she seemed to herself to be discovering rather than inventing. She could not fancy and build up at her leisure; she must wait till she could *see* how it really was. Her father was most anxious *Villette* should end happily; but how could it? Monsieur Paul Emmanuel really *did* die at sea. There was no help for it; all she could do was to conceal his fate in ambiguous phrases. If Miss Brontë gave reality to fiction, her biographer occasionally spreads a little of the varnish of the novel over her facts. She seems even sometimes to have indulged the idea that by force of imagination she could penetrate, as by experience, into the secrets of unknown facts.

"I asked her whether she had ever taken opium, as the description given of its effects in *Villette* was so exactly like what I had experienced; vivid and exaggerated presence

of objects, of which the outlines were indistinct, or lost in golden mist, &c. She replied that she had never, to her knowledge, taken a grain of it in any shape, but that she had followed the process she always adopted when she had to describe any thing which had not fallen within her own experience; she had thought intently on it for many and many a night before falling to sleep, wondering what it was like, or how it would be, till at length, sometimes after the progress of her story had been arrested at this one point for weeks, she wakened up in the morning with all clear before her, as if she had in reality gone through the experience, and then could describe it, word for word; as it had happened. I cannot account for this psychologically; I only am sure that it was so, because she said it."

Mrs. Gaskell need not puzzle herself to account for this "psychologically." Let her first be sure that when the live fish are immersed, the water does *not* overflow. *Villette* contains no description of the specific effects of opium, but only the impressions of a half-dazed excited mind. Stronger than that of most writers seems to have been Miss Brontë's experience of that almost tyrannous action of the creative impulse, that sense of possession, when the poet feels himself more an instrument than a voluntary agent, as if some viewless power spoke through him.

"When authors write best, or, at least, when they write most fluently, an influence seems to waken in them, which becomes their master; which will have its own way; putting out of view all behests but its own, dictating certain words, and insisting on their being used, whether vehement or measured in their nature; new-moulding characters, giving unthought-of turns to incidents, rejecting carefully-elaborated old ideas, and suddenly creating and adopting new ones."

In her novels, it is not so much the whole story as the separate scenes and detached incidents that delight us; and it is not the characters themselves so much as the mode in which they display themselves under particular circumstances. She is perfectly master of the art of narration; her events are linked in so easy and continuous a succession, that the reader loses the sense of the exquisite art by which it is done; and the wonderful thing is, that there are no dull places. Long she is sometimes, but never dull. A certain sinewy vigor gives interest to every paragraph. Character is her

favorite study; but, like most people who deliberately study character, she never thoroughly comprehends it. True perception of character seems to be something intuitive. It requires, at any rate, a nature of very extended though not necessarily deep sympathies, which finds something in itself answering to all hints, and ready to gather up all clues. Miss Bronte had nothing of this. She studies the manifestations, the workings of character; and it is these alone, for the most part, that she is enabled to reproduce. She does this with all her might. In *Shirley*, for instance, with intent and resolute eyes she sits gazing into the human heart. Darkness shades its penetralia; but her keen vision *shall* pierce the veil; she *will* compel its secrets to the light. She reads as if she set the characters in her own story down before her, and set herself, not to develop them, but to write down what she sees in them. It is not a creation, but a vivisection. The anatomical process pleases us; or, if this does not interest all, there is always for such the lively details, the stirring events, the expression of feeling, the clash of passions, accompanied by an intellectual byplay of the author's own. But the concrete characters, the persons, do not interest us much. Do any of us really care much for that little elfish Jane, or that ugly muscular Sultan Rochester? Should we not flee from Lucy Snowe and the little Professor? Are we not all very much surprised at the Cambridge student who wrote to Currer Bell, and begged to be allowed to consider Jane Eyre and Shirley Keeldar as his sisters?

Miss Bronte never deals with mere abstractions; all her people have body, reality, definiteness. But they are too singular. The greatest poets have always been those who have done the greatest things with the old every-day materials; and who have never, however special may have been their web, omitted to work up with it those threads which connect it with universal interests. Miss Bronte is apt to exclude too much common sympathies and every-day knowledge. Of many of her characters we can scarcely say whether they are truthful or not, they are so different from what we have seen, known, and experienced, either in Lancashire, Yorkshire, or elsewhere. Something Jane Eyre, and Lewis Moore, and

Madame Beck, have in common with us, no doubt; but no doubt also much of the charm of Currer Bell's works, and their great popularity, is due to this very thing—the minuteness and accuracy with which she has described unfamiliar scenes and characters; and to the thorough air of novelty which pervades both her subject-matter and her treatment. But this, though the most popular of attractions, is not the most lasting. New readers such works never lack; but few, if any, turn back to them as they do to Fielding, Scott, and Thackeray. It is wearisome to read them even twice over. Another thing which adds both to the singularity and the want of permanent interest of Miss Bronte's works is, that they have a world of manners of their own. Not a soul in them is represented under the ordinary conditions of propriety of demeanor. Rochester, Saint John, the two Moores, Crimsworth, behave like human beings certainly, but as certainly not like English gentlemen. We decline to be referred to Yorkshire, which Mrs. Gaskell treats as a *terra incognita*, of which she is the Columbus. These are neither meant for Yorkshiremen, nor like them. It is just in acquainting Miss Bronte with the forms of social intercourse, and the ordinary modes of expression, that observation would have been of use as the handmaid of her genius; but the opportunity of such observation she never commanded. Her school of manners,—we use the word in its wide sense,—is an imaginary one, drawn out of her own head; a very ably drawn one it is, and admirably it is made to subserve her characters and her incidents; but it is one strange to the experience of her readers. In Brussels, she had an opportunity of drawing manners from observation, and she availed herself of it. In the Professor, what a difference between her idea of an Eton man, and her description of his Brussels life; how false a notion she has of the one, and with what unsparing force, yes with how fine a touch, she can mark all she has really seen!

In her love for the study of character, she is apt to be led too far. Her sketches, in which observation alone worked, are admirable. Her Mrs. Reeds, her Miss Temple, her Miss Marchmont, her M. Pelet, are sharp and characteristic; but in her more elaborate efforts she attempts too much. No artist



can delineate the whole of the character of a human being; the most successful have been those who, having taken up their creations from a certain point of view, always look at them steadily from thence, throw the light on some side they wish to be prominent, and let the rest fade off into an obscurity, which the eye of the reader rounds dimly off, partly by the aid of his own imagination. They indicate a character, and dwell on one side of it. This gives the reader peace; he has time to gather a distinct image, which gains new clearness as he gazes at it. But Miss Bronte gives him no peace, she must always see the reverse side, she is anxious if possible to see both sides at once; she is always making new discoveries in her characters, we never know when we have them. Yet, as we have before said, she never represents them in course of change, never paints development of character; and she is so absorbed with what is before her, so much taken up with the scene immediately in hand, that she is apt insensibly to mould her personages so as to suit it, and give it the highest effect. She forgets what they are in thinking of what they are doing, and hence they are sometimes different people at different times. Jane Eyre is one person as a child, another with Mr. Rochester, and a third with the St. Johns. In *Villette*, Graham is one person, Dr. John a second, Dr. Bretton a third. Perhaps he affords the most marked instance of discontinuity of general character in all these novels, and the author herself became sensible of it. In a letter to Mr. Smith, she speaks of being conscious of a defect he had pointed out in "the discrepancy, the want of perfect harmony between Graham's boyhood and manhood." Like most persons with strong creative instincts, the young Brontes had all a strong fancy for drawing; Branwell alone seems to have had any real call for the art. Charlotte took small engravings, and copied them line for line in all their intricacy and minutiae; just so she draws in her novels. She drew on paper with exactness of detail, but out of proportion; just so she draws character. Her child's hand-writing, so minute and compressed, yet never abbreviated; microscopic even, yet never fine or delicate; not bold or graceful, but firm and angular,—is, with its

quaint distinctive characters, a sort of microcosmic emblem of her genius.

Mr. Lewes, it would seem from one of her letters, warned her to distrust her imagination and rely on her observation. He told her, "real experience is perennially interesting to all men." This is true of experience in its narrowest sense, the personal experience of the recorder; it is much less true of that mixed observation which we usually include within the term. Wiser advice (if, indeed, advice avails any thing in these cases) would have been to rely more on her imagination, and to avoid raw mingling of fact and fancy. The truest and the finest creation she ever made, the one which gives the most indisputable proof of the real greatness of her genius,—is the sensitive, deep-hearted child Paulina; we say the child, for the woman is much less ably and less subtly drawn. To make experience and observation valuable as such, they must be given in their naked simplicity. To eke out facts by the suggestions of imagination, or to conceal them by a varnish or fancy, is a very deceptive and unsatisfactory process. And this is what Currer Bell does with her characters. She selects either an actual living person she has seen, or collect traits of one she has not seen—generally the former, and *modifies* this person to make another. Of course, all imagined forms must have some basis of reality, and our words may seem to import a censure on such creations as Schiller's *Joan of Arc*, or Kingsley's *Elizabeth*. In both these, and such as these, there is a very large basis of fact; but the difference between them and Mr. Yorke, and Madame Beck, lies in the fact that in one case the imagination uses the fact as materials for a new creation, in the other it is employed to modify, disguise, and fill up a real figure. Miss Bronte herself was scarcely aware how faithfully she drew from the life; but her close adherence to the matter of her own limited experience is shown by the circumstance that her pictures were recognized as portraits. Hence arose not only defects in her workmanship, but a gross infraction of social rights, and an unpardonable infringement of private confidence; to the wrongfulness of which she seems to have been singularly blind, and unhappily her biographer is equally so. It is true Miss Bronte's por-

traits were not exact, but this only did the greater mischief. With one single exception, perhaps, that of the picture of her sister Emily, or Shirley, they certainly were not flattering; they were sufficient to identify those who were unfortunate enough to have become the subjects of her keen examination, and the variation did only the further injustice of conveying a false impression of them. One of her letters, which is a disclaimer of literal portrait-painting, contains at once a proof that she did copy pretty closely external indications of character, and that she did not seize the inner spirit. The lady to whom she writes recognizes the heroes, but not the heroines; for one of whom there seems little doubt, from what we learn in another place, that she herself had stood:

"You are not to suppose any of the characters in *Shirley* intended as literal portraits. It would not suit the rules of art, nor of my own feelings, to write in that style. We only suffer reality to suggest, never to dictate. The heroines are abstractions, and the heroes also. Qualities I have seen, loved, and admired, are here and there put in as decorative gems, to be preserved in that setting. Since you say you could recognise the originals of all except the heroines, pray whom did you suppose the two Moores to represent?"

Currer Bell's novels did not do more, however, than hang up the individuals she chose as her subjects for the comment or ridicule of those who were their immediate neighbors, and penetrating enough to discover them; her biographer has gone a step further, and, where she has not given their names in full, has exposed them to identification by any individual whose curiosity has been excited. Is the lady, who has been so cruelly libelled under the pseudonym of Madame Beek, likely to lead a happier life for the publication of *Villette*, the *Professor*, and the *Life of Charlotte Brontë*? There may not be the least real resemblance between the character in the picture and the person who occupies the corresponding place and is pointed out with so much accuracy; but Mrs. Gaskell should hear a little Brussels gossip, to learn how instant was the identification before she described the place and printed the names, and when small traits of personal demeanor are found to correspond, it is impossible to prevent the

world from believing the rest of the picture correct, and a grievous injustice is done which there is no possibility of remedying. Is the gossiping world to blame, that will misconstrue these things and give them an application they were never intended to have? It may be so; but the more certain it is that the world will act thus, the more carefully is an author bound to avoid the possibility of misconstruction. Can any explanations, any asseverations of those who knew him best, ever free the memory of Mr. Carus Wilson from the unjust stain cast upon it in *Jane Eyre*? What genius has stamped with her hand, false though it be, truth, with her commonplace asseverations, can never efface. We continue to read the novels, and not the vindictory statements. And if such a charge be true, is there any right to make it? None, certainly. The Eumenides may be alive or dead with Great Pan, as Mrs. Gaskell suggests; but they certainly have not delegated their functions to modern novel-writers. These may, if they choose, satirise general abuses, or stigmatise general wrongs; but to punish individual ones is not within their sphere. Mr. Reade's *It is never too late to mend* affords one of the most glaring modern instances of the infringement of this principle. If he wished to hold up to public reprobation the conduct of the officials connected with the Birmingham gaol, he was bound to limit himself to a statement of the facts exactly as they were; and the law would have protected him in so doing, for it is clearly for the public benefit that derelictions of public duties should be made public. If he intended only to point out the defects and cruelties incidental to our prison management and magisterial supervision, he should have precluded any danger of his feigned instance being identified with any special case. The novelist, who is not bound to adhere to fact, is excluded by that very exemption from dealing with bodies of particular facts, more especially in cases where individual reputations are implicated; to use a mingled medium of truth and fiction as the instrument of censure is to deprive the accused of his legitimate opportunity of defence. The popular novel is a very dangerous weapon; its thrusts can neither be parried or avoided, and to turn it against

individuals is an abuse of power which cannot be too strictly censured.

As to the Cowan Bridge controversy, we have no disposition to enter on it. It seems to be admitted that the Casterton Schools are now well conducted; and if it be thought worth while to enable the public to arrive at a conclusion as to its efficiency or defects in its first stage, more responsible evidence must be furnished on both sides. The anonymous assertions of either pupils or superintendent cannot carry much weight. One thing is, however, pretty clear, that the picture contained in *Jane Eyre* of the establishment, and its manager and founder, is not to be accepted as an exact, still less as a complete one. Accurate observer as Miss Bronte seems to have been, she had also strong feelings and a vivid imagination; and these acting on the recollections of a child, of eight or nine years of age, are certainly not to be implicitly trusted. Of what strong, it is not too much to say rash and inconsiderate assertions, Miss Bronte was capable in this matter, may be judged from a letter which she wrote in 1848, giving an account of the school expressly for the use of a lady who proposed to send a pupil there. Speaking of it as it was at the time from which her experience dated, she says, "The establishment was at that time in its infancy, and a sad rickety infancy it was. Typhus fever decimated the school periodically; and consumption and scrofula, in every variety of form bad air and water, bad and insufficient diet, can generate, preyed on the ill-fated pupils." This is the description of a lazaret-house. Mrs. Gaskell speaks of only one fever; and distinctly states that only one girl died from it, and that after her removal home.

Miss Bronte did not scruple to use her friends either to "point a moral or adorn a tale." "This occasionally led her into difficulties," is a very indulgent way of characterising the wholesale invasion of domestic confidence described in the following extract; which is but one of the passages in the *Life* by which almost all the prominent characters in Miss Bronte's different novels are identified with real persons. The thing to be regarded is, that this system must have occasionally led other people into difficulties:

"In *Shirley* she took the idea of most of her characters from life, although the incidents and situations were, of course, fictitious.

She thought that if these last were purely imaginary, she might draw from the real without detection; but in this she was mistaken, her studies were too closely accurate. This occasionally led her into difficulties. People recognized themselves, or were recognized by others, in her graphic descriptions of their personal appearance and modes of action and turns of thought; though they were placed in new positions, and figured away in scenes far different to those in which their actual life had been passed. Miss Bronte was struck by the force or peculiarity of the character of some one whom she knew; she studied it, and analysed it with subtle power; and having traced it to its germ, she took that germ as the nucleus of an imaginary character, and worked outwards; thus reversing the process of analysis and unconsciously reproducing the same external development. The 'three curates' were real living men, haunting Haworth and the neighboring district; and so obtuse in perception that, after the first burst of anger at having their ways and habits chronicled was over, they rather enjoyed the joke of calling each other by the names she had given them. 'Mrs. Pryor' was well known to many who loved the original dearly. The whole family of the Yorkes were, I have been assured, almost daguerreotypes. Indeed, Miss Bronte told me that, before publication, she had sent those parts of the novel in which these remarkable persons are introduced, to one of the sons; and his reply after reading it was simply that 'she had not drawn them strong enough.' From those many-sided sons, I suspect she drew all that there was of truth in the characters of the heroes in her first two works. They, indeed, were almost the only young men she knew intimately besides her brother. There was much friendship, and still more confidence, between the Bronte family and them, although their intercourse was often broken and irregular. There was never any warmer feeling on either side."

They must be strange people who would not feel grievously injured by being pointed out as the originals of that hard, contentious, selfish set of people, the Yorke family. Miss Bronte represented in Rose and Jessy two dear friends; they make be like, but they are not portraits, they have over them exactly the dark, somewhat disproportioned and forbidding aspect of a daguerreotype. Miss Bronte's drawing always has this effect; she prided herself on not drawing flattering portraits of human nature; but she was unaware how hard and dark her lines were. Of this, and of the different light in which

her characters showed to herself to that in which she displayed them to her readers, there is a curious proof in a fact stated by Mrs. Gaskell, viz., that she thought Jane Eyre so like the Francesca of Miss Bremer's *Neighbors*, that she was afraid every one must think she had taken her conception from it. Most of all, however, we confess we are moved for the three curates. They seem so defenceless and so good-humored about the matter. Every one has a fling at them. The biographer tells us they were "so obtuse in perception." They must be happy men, if they don't know how hard they have been hit; but even pachydermatous animals have rights which should be respected. Can we be so sure, too, that they did not feel it? perhaps they thought it the wiser course to laugh it off; perhaps they exercised a Christian forgiveness. *Prima facie* one could expect that even

"The poor curate that we tread upon  
In corporal anguish feels a pang as great  
As when a rector dies."

Mere curates as they were, however, we cannot help thinking it a little too bad that Miss Bronte should not only wrong them, but scorn them because they submit to wrong:

"The very curates, poor fellows! show no resentment; each characteristically finds solace for his own wounds in crowing over his brethren. Mr. Donne was, at first, a little disturbed; for a week or two he was in disquietude, but he is now soothed down; only yesterday I had the pleasure of making him a comfortable cup of tea, and seeing him sip it with revived complacency. It is a curious fact, that since he read *Shirley*, he has come to the house oftener than ever, and been remarkably meek and assiduous to please. Some people's natures are veritable enigmas: I quite expected to have had one good scene at least with him; but as yet nothing of the sort has occurred."

"The very curates!" but surely we must all have a beginning. The curate is the undeveloped stage (by possibility, at least) of that perfect creature which, in expanded lawn sleeves, with venerable apron in front, and with venerable silk-encased legs, gracefully pendulous behind, soars benignantly into the House of Lords. That very Bishop of Ripon, whose visit spread a mild halo over the parsonage at Haworth, may once have been a curate. Miss Bronte should have thought of these things. She lacked

the prophetic insight of the American authoress, who was so shocked to see some of our fine ladies' carriages rolling through the streets of London "with three possible inheritors of eternal glory hanging on behind."

The *Professor*, now published, throws no new light on the characteristics of Miss Bronte's genius; no new ground is broken; indeed, the greater part of it only retraces for us the Belgian experiences with which we are already familiar. Here is the first draft of Madame Beck, under the name of Made-moiselle Reuter; M. Pelet, the French master, is a new and excellent sketch: but we have our old friend, the teacher and intellectual subjugator of the female heart, in Mr. William Crimsworth, but mixed in his nature something of the sulky, secret-feeding affections of Lucy Snowe; in Mr. Hunsden, the educated and abnormal Yorkshire manufacturer, a crude, ill-drawn, and exaggerated, as well as badly-defined figure; and in Frances, the plain, piquant, strong-minded, fascinating little girl. But Frances, though like, is unlike. She gives a charm to the book; intellect is reconciled with a "sweet, attractive kind of grace," which Miss Bronte does not often indulge us by delineating, Frances is a refined and softened Jane Eyre, and decidedly the most attractive female character that ever came from the pen of this author. She suffers the ordinary fate, however. Miss Bronte was a great upholder of the privileges of her sex, yet no writer in the world has ever so uniformly represented women at so great a disadvantage. They invariably fall victims to the man of strong intellect, and generally muscular frame, who lures them on with affected indifference and simulated harshness; by various ingenious trials assures himself they are worthy of him, and, when his own time has fully come, raises them with a bashaw-like air from their prostrate condition, presses them triumphantly to his heart, or seats them on his knee, as the case may be, and indulges in a con-descending burst of passionate emotion. All these men are in their attachments utterly and undisguisedly selfish, and we must say we grudge them their easily won victories over the inexperienced placid little girls they lay siege to. It is not thus that generous men make their advances, or that women, worthy of the name, are won. One such



case might pass; but it is Miss Bronte's standing idea of a romantic courtship. The *Professor* contains some very unsparing and outspoken expressions, especially in the sketches of two or three young ladies who occupied prominent places in the Brussels school described. Miss Bronte had had no opportunity of learning what in England is considered proper to be said, and naturally, from her foreign experience, adopted some touch of continental freedom of speech. While we are on this subject, we cannot pass without notice a passage in the *Life* in strange contrast with the general tone of universal admiration. A passage which few, we think, can have read without just indignation; and after penning which, we cannot help saying, we wonder the writer had the heart to accuse the *Quarterly* reviewer of injustice or pharisaism:

"I do not deny for myself," says Mrs. Gaskell, with an air worthy of Mrs. Candour, "the existence of coarseness here and there in her works, otherwise so entirely noble. I only ask those who read them to consider her life, which has been openly laid bare before them, and to say how it could be otherwise. She saw few men; and among these few were one or two with whom she had been acquainted since early childhood, who had shown her much friendliness and kindness—through whose family she had received many pleasures—for whose intellect she had a great respect—but who talked before her, if not to her, with as little reticence as Rochester talked to Jane Eyre. Take this in connection with her poor brother's sad life, and the outspoken people among whom she lived; remember her strong feeling of the duty of representing life as it really is, not as it ought to be; and then do her justice for all that she was, and all that she would have been had God spared her, rather than censure her because circumstances forced her to touch pitch, as it were, and by it her hand was for a moment defiled. It was but skin-deep. Every change in her life was purifying her; it hardly could raise her. Again I cry, 'If she had but lived!'"

Charlotte Bronte's works are far from being "otherwise so entirely noble;" they have defects in abundance; but there never were books more free from the stain here so quietly assumed, and so feelingly lamented as unavoidable. Rochester does *not* talk without reticence to Jane Eyre. The writer never *did* touch pitch: she might paint it; but it was in the safety of her own innocence,

and we lose patience at being told, with all this array of exculpation, that she needed "purifying." Coarse materials, indeed, she too much deals with; and her own style has something rude and uncompromising in it, not always in accordance with customary ideas of what is becoming in a female writer; but it would be scarcely possible to name a writer who, in handling such difficult subject-matter, carried the reader so safely through by the unseen guardianship and unconsciously exercised influence of her stainless purity and unblemished rectitude. The conventional proprieties of speech and subject-matter she disregards, indeed; her delicacy lost some of its bloom abroad, and she may be said with justice to want refinement; but even that is the conventional refinement rather than the real one. It has been well said, and every reader perceives it, or ought to do so, that her plain speaking is itself the result of her purity. What she has that jars on us often in her writings is not so much these things as a certain harshness, a love of the naked fact too unsparing, and a tendency to believe that what is attractive scarcely can be true. In the school of ladylike refined writing, true in its own sphere, enlivening, softening, and elevating, which deals gently with weak mortality, and reversing the saying which dissuades us from breaking a butterfly on a wheel, punishes vice with a knitting-needle—which compels into courtly phrases the swelling form and native hideousness of crime, and throws over the stern precipices and gloom-shrouded abysses of life—remorse and terror and madness—frail bridges of happy fancies and spirit-consoling hopes,—in this school we have many proficientes. High in the list stands Mrs. Gaskell's own name. Graceful fictions have power to beguile us, to cheer us, to instruct us; and if with too silver a voice she echoes the dread undertones of the mystery of sin and suffering and death, we remember that reality has more sides than one, that each side has its truth, and welcome the genius which instinctively turns to that aspect where beauty predominates, and whose darkest shades are error and frailties and penitence. But Miss Bronte had a different call: her feet were rougher shod to walk through both life and art; and if she does not lead us through the dark caverns of life, at least she does not attempt to measure their depths with a silken thread.

or hang pale lights of fancy in their mouths. As she passes over the lesser evils of life, she describes them in their native ruggedness; through the depths she steals, in general, in the silence of fortitude; and only now and then some brief cry of personal anguish rings sharp and sudden through the darkness.

It is impossible to pass from the subject of Mrs. Gaskell's *Life of Miss Bronte*, without some allusion to that particular feature which has of late been pressed upon the attention of the public.

It is our function to be critics, not flatterers. We have not scrupled to state freely our conviction, that this biography is too detailed a record of domestic life; that it infringes somewhat on that personal reserve and dignity of privacy, which should limit the gratification of public curiosity or public interest. We felt long ago that these and yet more powerful considerations should have checked that outpoken burst of feeling,

and that direct personal indictment, which accompanied the account of Branwell Bronte's wretched fate, itself recorded with unnecessary detail. Having had no opportunity to record this impression before the late correspondence was advertised, we have no inclination to dwell on it now, or to follow the example of reading an insulting lesson to one who must already be painfully sensible of her error. If, on the other hand, we have in this paper not swelled the number of those little paragraphs which publishers delight to cull, and which have pretty well exhausted the "combinations and permutations" of the language of eulogy, it is not because we have not a deep sense of the value of a record which raises the life of a woman so high above the triumphs of the artist, or the beauty and the skill with which that record has been framed; but because we love to believe that authors of sense and delicacy estimate indiscriminate laudation at its true worth.

HOW DO OYSTERS MAKE THEIR SHELLS.—The following Note may assist in furnishing a reply to this Query:

"A London oysterman can tell the age of his flock to a nicety. The age of an oyster is not to be found out by looking into its mouth. It bears its years upon its back. Everybody who has handled an oyster-shell must have observed that it seemed as if composed of successive layers of plates overlapping each other. These are technically termed 'shoots,' and each of them marks a year's growth, so that by counting them we can determine at a glance the year when the creature came into the world. Up to the time of its maturity the shoots are regular and successive; but after that time they become irregular, and are piled one over the other, so that the shell becomes more and more thickened and bulky. Judging from the great thickness to which some oyster-shells have attained, this mollusc is capable, if left to its natural changes unmolested, of attaining a patriarchal longevity."

R. W. HACKWOOD.

—Notes and Queries.

FOREIGN AIRS AND NATIVE GRACES.—Respecting the origin of psalm tunes, add the following from the *Illustrated Exhibitor*:

"The first tunes were popular airs and dances. The *Old Hundredth* was a love ditty; *Rebuke me not* was a jig; and *Stand up, O Lord*, was a Poitou dance. Gardiner, under the sanction

of George IV., and Archbishop Manners, adapted 220 strains of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, to as many of the best versions of the Psalms; and he says, musically speaking, 'England has not produced a single original idea.' He ascribes the thoughts of Arne and Purcell to the Italians, and our grave church music to the Flemings." R. W. HACKWOOD.

—Notes and Queries.

MONOLITHS.—The famous obelisk of Forres, so interesting to the antiquary,—which has been described by some writers as formed of a species of stone unknown in the district, and which, according to a popular tradition, was transported from the Continent,—is evidently composed "of a pure quartzoze sandstone furnished by the upper beds of the Old Red Sandstone system. These are extensively quarried in Moray, near the village of Burghead, and exported to all parts of the world. It is the best building stone of the north of Scotland, both for beauty and durability." See *The Old Red Sandstone*, by Hugh Miller, ed. 6., 1857., p. 239. F. S.

—Notes and Queries.

SHOWING THE WHITE FEATHER.—I thought that the appearance of a white feather in the fine plumage of a gamecock was considered as evidence against the purity of his breeding. Hence the stigma. But I am no ornithologist

—Notes and Queries. ALFRED GATTY.

From Household Words.

## HELENA MATTHEWSON.

## CHAPTER THE FIRST.

My father was rector of Lichendale, a little, grey-walled town, of which few but north-country people have ever heard. My mother died when I was quite a child, leaving me—little Helena, as I was always called—with no other companions than my two brothers, Paul and Lawrence, and our faithful, old nurse, Hannah. My eldest brother, Paul, was grave and moody; and Lawrence and I, who were warm allies, were nearly always quarrelling with him. Lawrence could not bear to hear what Paul so firmly maintained;—that unless Helena were a better girl, and more careful over her spelling, she would be burnt alive after she died. Not seeing the inconsistency of this terrible threat, and, fearing from Paul's authoritative tone, that he had the power to execute it, Lawrence would take up my cause with fiery zeal, and often cudgelled Paul into granting me a milder sentence. We used to take our lesson-books into the study every morning; and, while I learnt my spelling, my brothers read and construed with my father.

But Paul soon grew too old for mere home-schooling; and, after much secrecy and mysterious preparation, he was sent to the grammar-school at Sawbridge. Lawrie and I made merry over his departure. We had wilder games than ever in the garden and woods, and got into twice as many scrapes as before; so that sometimes even Hannah lost all patience with us, and dragged us—little trembling culprits—before my father, who lifted his kind eyes from his book, and tried, with but little success, to look displeased.

Those happy days passed too quickly. Lawrence went to school; and, after two or three years there, to Rome. He had always said he would be an artist; and he did not flinch from his plan as he grew out of childhood, but adhered to it so steadily that at length my father consented to his going to Italy to study. He was very young to be sent so far alone; but my father had lived for so long in Lichendale, that he seemed to have forgotten how full of danger and temptation a city like Rome would be to one eager and reckless as Lawrence.

Poor Lawrie! I remember our last parting well. He was so glad to be going to Italy,

so sorry to leave Lichendale, and so charmed with the unusual hurry and bustle, and his suddenly acquired importance, that smiles and tears chased each other away in quick succession from his face. I can see now his last, sad look, as the mail-coach, which had stopped for him at our gate, drove off; and I remember turning out of the sunny garden into the house, and running up stairs that I might sob undisturbed in some quiet hiding-place. But Paul, who had come over for the day to say good-bye to Lawrence, soon discovered me; and, instead of trying to comfort me, talked in a slow, measured moan of the wickedness of my grief, and of his belief that despondency was a child of the devil.

Lawrence's letters were frequent and affectionate, and at first almost homesick. The pleasures of Rome were great, he wrote, but still he loved Lichendale and Helena, far, far more dearly than ever, and often longed to come back. Gradually, however, another tone crept into them. There were fewer allusions to home, and to the time when he should return to us; but, instead, the thin blue sheets were covered with accounts of the grand English families that he met, whose patronage seemed to intoxicate him, and of beautiful ladies, whom, I feared, he liked better than little Helena, if they were really as lovely as he described them. Sir Edward Stamford, the owner of Lichendale Hall, and who would have been the great man of our neighborhood had he ever visited it, was one of the acquaintance of whom we heard most. My father regretted this much; for reports had travelled home that the life Sir Edward led abroad was wild and dissipated; and those who recollected him at Lichendale, in the old Baronet's time, declared that he had been always self-willed and passionate.

Lawrence had been absent six years. I was grown into a tall, shy girl of sixteen; and Paul, after a successful career at Cambridge, was on the eve of being ordained. Surely, Lawrence would soon come back, I thought. My father also longed for his return, and wrote to urge him to leave Rome, at least for a while. We were full of glad expectation. My father counted the weeks that would elapse before his return, and I counted the days and hours, which I thought would never pass.

Before that day came a more terrible—a more suddenly terrible one. A letter came for my father from Italy, but not directed in Lawrence's hand. I took it into my father's study myself, and watched him as he read it. He seemed to dread evil. He broke the seal slowly, and paused before he dared to glance at the contents. I was so frightened and impatient that I could have torn it open, had it been bound with iron, and my father's delay was dreadful to me. One look at his face, as he stared in horror at the short, Italian sentence, confirmed my worst fears, and I did not need to hear the word "Dead!" rise slowly to his lips, to strike the awful certainty through me, that Lawrence—affectionate, wilful Lawrence—would never come back to us. I did not scream or faint. I felt the longing that I have had from childhood, whenever I have been unhappy or terror-stricken, to creep away with my grief and hide: but I could not leave my father, pale and ghastly as he looked. Thank God! I did not. For years he had symptoms of heart-disease. I clung to him in silence, thinking that it was only his great mental pain that made him so deadly still and white. I chafed and kissed his hands; and, in grief for his grief, almost forgot my own. "Paul—send for him!" he sighed. I left the room, wrote a short note to summon him, and then hastened back to the study, for I began to fear my father was ill.

In those few minutes Death had entered, and claimed his victim. What a night of misery I passed! I longed to die. Why was I spared?—spared to pain and mourning and craving grief?

#### CHAPTER THE SECOND.

NEARLY two years passed, and I still lived at the dear old rectory. Sir Edward Stamford, the patron of the living of Lichendale, had written to offer it to Paul when he heard of my father's death. The letter was kind, and full of polite regrets that they should most probably never meet, as he intended to remain always abroad. There was no mention of Lawrence in it; which I thought strange. My brother hesitated for some time before accepting a living from one whom he chose to call a sinner in the sight of the Lord; but his affection for Lichendale; for its grand, old parish church, and

the sober, godly towns-people, overcame these scruples, and he settled down into my father's place, if not to fulfil its duties as mildly, at any rate with as rigid conscientiousness and self-denial. Hannah had left us, to live with some orphan nieces of hers in another town; so I was Paul's little housekeeper, as I had latterly been my father's. There were none of the few families of our own rank in Lichendale that I much liked, or with whom I kept up any great intimacy, so that I often felt sadly lonely. Paul loved me in his grave way, but he seemed to think that any unnecessary display of affection was harmful, and I cannot remember his ever petting or caressing me. Still, after the first great grief for Lawrie and my father had been softened by time, I was happy—in a sort of quiet, listless way. The country round Lichendale was beautiful. On one side, was the park, with the Hall peering through the trees; and, on the other, the red sands which the tide rarely covered, stretching away to the silver sea-line. I used to take long walks by myself on these sands, or in the woods. I did not read much; for the only books that Paul allowed me were what I did not care for; either abstruse treatises on religion, or biographies, in which the history of the man was made subservient to all manner of doleful morals, and melancholy hints to sinners. We lived very simply. Lawrence had left many debts in Rome; and, to pay these, it was necessary for a few years to give up many luxuries, and to part with one of our old trusty servants. So I found some pleasant occupation in little household duties.

This was my life when I was eighteen; and it was then that Sir Edward Stamford suddenly returned to Lichendale. He was brought by the report of an approaching dissolution of Parliament, people said; for, they whispered, he meant to stand for Lichendale, to turn out the present sleepy old member. Lichendale is one of the smallest borough-towns in England; but, at the passing of the Reform Bill, everybody thought it likely to become a populous seaport. There were rumors of docks to be built, and new lines of traffic to be opened; and the old inhabitants, terrified at the prospect of these changes, swore vengeance against the different companies that were to



effect them; but, as time wore on, and year after year the sea gradually receded from the town, these projects had to be abandoned, and people began to see that Lichendale was doomed to sink into a quiet, decaying town; instead of rising to any great maritime importance, and they almost questioned the necessity of its being represented. The constituency was small and tractable, with but vague political notions. Colonel Peterson had been elected more on account of his high character as a squire and country gentleman, than for anything else; and even though Sir Edward should enter the lists, with his brilliant talents and strong opinions, yet it would be doubtful, unless his character could bear comparison with the honest old colonel's, whether he would succeed in his attempt to wrest the borough from his hands.

On the afternoon of the day which followed Sir Edward's return, Paul bade me get ready to go and call with him at the Hall. I dared not disobey; yet the thoughts of venturing, even with my brother's protection, within that terribly grand house and encountering its master, made me feel shy and frightened. But our walk through the park, with our feet sinking deep into the mossy, daisy-spotted grass, and the sea-wind making a low, surging sound in the dark pine trees round us, freshened me up, and gave me a merry courage. I danced along, laughing at the notion of my going like a grand dame to call on the lord of the manor in the afternoon,—I who had spent the morning in mending stockings, and shelling peas. At another time, Paul would have reproved me for my wild spirits; but he was now busy turning over and over and perfecting the speech of welcome and thanks with which he meant to greet his patron. We reached the great portico. I had once been shown over the Hall by a cross old housekeeper, but I had never before called there, or leisurely examined any of the beautiful rooms; so that I was quite delighted that Sir Edward delayed coming to us, and left me time to look at all the curiosities with which the spacious ante-room was filled. Sir Edward kept us waiting a long time; and when he at length entered, he looked pre-occupied and somewhat constrained. He was about thirty, to all appearance; tall and firmly built, with

a face passion-worn, and pale, yet strangely attractive. He hardly raised his eyes to our faces when he approached us; but once, when the conversation flagged and he turned them full on me, I quailed beneath their steady, lustrous gaze.

"Paul," I said, as we walked home, "I did so wish you would have asked Sir Edward about Lawrie. He might have remembered much to tell us if you had but begun the subject, which perhaps he did not like to introduce himself."

"I could not mention his name to a stranger: it would not be right in me, if I could. You talk about Lawrence freely and often, as if you felt no shame in his death; but when you grow older, you will feel as I do, and shudder when you remember that he was a duellist."

Poor dead Lawrie! I felt as if it was some great moral want in me that prevented my blaming him as Paul did. To Paul a duel was murder in its most cold and wilful form. He seemed to forget the temptations to which Lawrence had been exposed, and the fact that he was the challenged—not the challenger; nay, sometimes it seemed as if he forgot that it was his own brother whom he so relentlessly condemned. I could only pity Lawrie goaded—as I felt he must have been; by false shame, and not by any unforgiving passion—to that last act which he had expiated with his life. But Paul, as I have said, felt differently. It hurt his pride of goodness that his brother should have died such a death. He hushed it up as much as he could; notwithstanding, the report spread through Lichendale that "young Mathewson had died far away across seas in a murdering-match;" and deep words of wrath against his murderer were mingled with regrets for my father; whose death it was known, had been caused by the sudden sorrow. With whom Lawrence had fought, we did not know. No details had been given in the letter which my father had received; and Paul would never make inquiries, either as to the cause of the duel, or the name of the challenger; so that the suspicions which rested, with but little ground, on a French artist were never confirmed. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord," Paul would repeat to himself, half aloud, whenever people talked of the chance of discovering

the unknown murderer ; as if it gave him a sort of grim pleasure to remember into what Almighty hands he had yielded his cause. Surely, I thought, the Creator in his great goodness judges more mercifully than men judge.

#### CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE morning after our call, Paul was out, and I had gone up-stairs to get my hat for a stroll, when Jane came panting up the stairs, breathless with astonishment, for "Sir Edward was in the parlor!" What could he want?

"Did you tell him Mr. Paul was out, Jane?"

"Yes, Miss Helen; but he asked if you were in the house, and he came in almost afore I'd time to answer yes."

He must have called on some urgent business, I thought; and I hurried down to him. His ride through the fresh morning air had flushed his cheeks, and he looked very handsome. His half-haughty, half-careless bearing impressed me as something strange and striking; it was so different from Paul's grave, slow manner.

"You must not think me an impertinent intruder, Miss Mathewson," he said, as I entered; "I bring my excuse in my pocket," and he tossed a note on to the table. "It is to beg you and your brother to dine with me to-morrow. I wrote it for the chance of your being out. There seems but little prospect of a dissolution, and time hangs heavily on my hands; so, if you and Mr. Mathewson will give me the pleasure of your society for to-morrow evening at least, I shall be quite delighted."

I felt that I ought to respond to this invitation with some very civil thanks; but the thought that came uppermost in my mind was of surprise at Sir Edward's want of occupation.

"All your tenants would be so glad to see you," I said, hesitatingly; "if you have so much spare time, I mean."

"Do you think they would?" replied Sir Edward, looking surprised at my daring to hint at his neglect of duty as a landlord. "I have always transacted business with them through my agent. Still, perhaps, they might care to see me, though I can't say the anxiety to meet is mutual. The far round Lichendale must be a very ~~very~~ <sup>very</sup> ~~very~~ <sup>very</sup> of people. Can you tell ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> character of

bear here, Miss Mathewson? You must know my tenants well. Do those in the town, for instance, hold me very low in their righteous estimation, pray? Have reports unfavorable to me travelled from Italy?" he said, with a bitterness which a smile faintly concealed.

"I do not know if they love you at present; for it is difficult to love those one never sees. No! no! I don't mean that," I added quickly, thinking of Lawrie; "but it would be difficult for them to love one who has left them, and shown no interest in their welfare. I know that they are a good and grateful set of people, and that you might easily win their affection I am sure."

"I was thinking of their good esteem merely as regarded the probabilities of my being elected, if there should be a dissolution," said Sir Edward, earnestly; "but you make me feel ashamed of myself. I ought to consider it more as a proof of my having been a good landlord to them, and less as a means of my own success in life. I shall take your hint; mean while, I am confoundedly disappointed at Parliament having settled down again so quietly. I had quite worked myself up into a fever of imagination, at the thoughts of my contesting the election with Colonel Peterson."

"You left Rome on purpose to stand for Lichendale, did you not?"

"Yes," said Sir Edward, musingly, and his face brightened with some unspoken, sunny recollection of the Eternal City.

"Did you know my brother Lawrence there?" I asked quickly, for I was afraid of my courage failing me if it did not grasp at the first opportunity of asking the question which Paul had so strongly discounted.

"I met him many times," said Sir Edward, in a low, indistinct voice, starting from his reverie. His eyes were fastened on me—full of pity, I fancied; but I dared hardly meet them. He said little more, and soon went away.

O! he, too, thinks like Paul, that Lawrence has sinned deeply, and would avoid ~~as such~~ <sup>as such</sup> a thought to myself, as I pondered over the visit; and I wondered if Sir Edward disliked me for mentioning Lawrence so namelessly.

## CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

SIR EDWARD was like a flash of lightening striking across my quiet path. Every thing in my daily life lost its brightness. We saw a good deal of him, and soon I began to feel those days which passed without meeting him, long and dreary. Each day I liked his face better; and the look of passion, that I had at first noticed in it, seemed, by degrees, to give place to one of gentleness and kindness. Gradually, too, tales of recent kind deeds amongst his tenantry, took the place of the reports which has been rife in Lichendale before his return, of his dissipation at Rome. I sometimes wondered if my few words were the cause of his kindly intercourse with the poor people; but I checked myself quickly in this presumptuous supposition, and attributed the change to his natural good feeling. At any rate, it could hardly be to curry favor with his constituents; for, all chance of a speedy dissolution of Parliament seemed past.

He seemed, to my astonishment, to care to talk to me, even more than to Paul, whose prejudice against him never quite wore off. Paul—if ever I ventured to express any of my boundless admiration for Sir Edward's wit or genius—checked me, and reminded me of all we had heard against his character.

"I can believe him passionate, Paul; but surely he is nothing worse."

"Passion is a fearful thing, Helena," Paul would reply; "and I believe Sir Edward to be selfish—more from habit than disposition perhaps; but still inexcusably selfish."

"He has had no motive for self-denial, most likely," I urged.

One beautiful evening—it was then the month of June—I set out to walk by a short cut through the park, to see a woman who was ill, and to whom I was taking some things. I hurried along; for I was late. Paul had set out some time before to the church, where there was service that evening, and I knew he would be vexed if I were not in time for it. I had got into a way of always looking out for Sir Edward; and, that evening, although I had to walk quickly, I could not refrain from stopping every now and then to see if he was in sight. I met the curate hastening to the church. I quickened my steps, and determined not to stop again till I reached the cottage. Noth-

ing startles one so much as the sudden fulfilment of some present dream that hope has conjured up. And, as I walked along fancying what I should do and say if Sir Edward were to appear, I was startled by the well-known canter of his horse. My heart beat wildly. I thought it would have burst. The hoofs struck louder and louder on the grass, as the horse bounded towards me, but I did not turn round again. I longed to see if it really were Sir Edward, or whether I was mistaken; but I felt that I was scarlet and I bent my head under my hat, and tried to hide my blushes. Sir Edward sprang from his horse, and stopped me. I do not know now exactly what he said. Even then I caught at its meaning from his face rather than heard his words; for my brain reeled—the trees seemed to rock, and the light to quiver and fade before my eyes. Faint and dizzy, I thought I must have fallen to the ground at his feet; but Sir Edward saw how white I grew, and passed his strong arm round me. I think he did not dislike my weakness; for as we stood there, he told me how, from his first look at my face he had liked me, and cared to see me again, and that he now loved me dearly, and wanted me to promise to be his wife. It was strange to me, and yet very sweet to be spoken to with such loving tenderness. It brought back to my mind the days when I had my father and Lawrence to caress me; and, mistily, there uprose a dim remembrance of one, holding me tight in her dying grasp, pressing long, soft kisses on the little cheek she had wetted with her tears: for, with such gentle words and ways as a mother might use to a frightened child, did Sir Edward strive to soothe me, till my faintness passed, and he had gained my answer.

The church bells stopped.

"I must go, Sir Edward, or Paul will be so vexed?"

"You shall neither go to church, nor call me Sir Edward," he said, smiling; and detaining me with playful force, he made me sit down on a low ledge of rock that pierced the grass close by, cushioned with soft, purple thyme, and golden-starred moneywort. "Helena," he continued, his eyes pleading more earnestly than his words, "can you forgive the wild, wicked youth that I have spent? Will you strive to forget what I have been, and learn to think of me

only as I now am : pardoning all that I have done wrong for the sake of my true, deep love?"

I did not answer. I hardly heard his last words. A sudden doubt had filled my mind, that cast a dark shadow across the sunshine of my happiness.

"When you ask me to be your wife, Sir Edward," I said, trying not to dread his answer, "do you remember the shame that Paul says attaches to our name? Do you remember that my youngest brother died in a duel?"

Sir Edward started.

"Those are your brother's rigid notions, Helena—very orthodox no doubt—but they are not mine. In this peaceful place, perhaps, duelling seems a terrible thing; but it is nonsense, of Mr. Matthewson to talk of it so. No stain inflicted on your name from that—though if it did—still I would marry you."

"I have always thought Paul judged Lawrie too harshly," I said, "and I am glad you think the same. Did you first like my face because it reminded you of Lawrence's, Sir Edward?"

Sir Edward answered me with a gay laugh; but his voice trembled.

I wished the church bells to ring again, with their peaceful, booming sound. There seemed something half unholy in the light, careless way in which he had spoken of duelling: although intended to quiet my doubts. It felt to me—yes! I am sure that it is not my present fancy—it felt to me at that moment, as if Lawrence stood unseen between me and Sir Edward. The wind, chill and damp, rustled through the trees, with a dreary, shuddering sound. Sir Edward rose, and walked apart for a few minutes.

"Go home, dear little Helena," he said, at length; "I shall come and see your brother to-morrow."

I got home quickly, and sat in the twilight waiting for Paul.

#### CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

I HAD half feared that Paul might refuse his consent to our engagement; but I was mistaken. His opinion of Sir Edward had that very day been greatly improved by something he had heard in the town—some kind or honorable deed, I forget exactly what; and, with many admonitions as to my future conduct, and not a few reproofs for

past misdemeanors, he gave a slow, solemn consent.

The few weeks of my engagement were perfect happiness to me. Before, I had had no one to sympathise with me in all my daily joys and sorrows, or in my deeper feelings; but, now, Edward would listen with untiring patience and ready sympathy to anything that came into my head. Only about Lawrence I never talked to him. Paul's opinions—although I could not accept them—had yet sufficient power, by their firm persistency, to shake my confidence in my own; and I dreaded lest Edward's pride should ever turn and rebel at the remembrance of what Paul called our tarnished name, and I felt glad that Sir Edward himself never alluded to the subject, of which I feared to remind him. Paul's grave, sullen manners hardly vexed me now; for I knew it was but to bear with them for an hour or so, and that in the next Edward would be at my side. He awoke my interest in a thousand new things. To be his fit companion, I felt I must read books which I had never even seen, and these he gladly lent me from the library at the Hall. One day when I was there, and he was hunting up some volume for me, my eye was attracted to a drawer which was partly open. I looked into it. It was full of beautiful gems, delicate enamels, and mosaics, that he had brought from Italy; and, in the furthest corner, glittering in the darkness, lay some quaintly carved pistols.

"Shut that drawer, Helena!" said Sir Edward, fiercely, turning round suddenly, and seeing where I stood.

I obeyed, and laughingly asked if it was a second Blue Beard's cupboard. But I got no answer, and when I looked round, Sir Edward was fixedly watching me, all color gone from his cheeks—all tenderness from his eyes.

Did you again stand between and part us, Lawrence?

Edward had promised to walk with me on the sands, on the evening of the day but one before that fixed for my wedding. I was punctual to my appointment. The stable clock at the Hall rung out eight as I reached the bridge which, crossing the river, leads into the park, and which was our usual trysting-place; but no Edward was there. I waited till nine o'clock, and then, fright-



ened at his not coming, ran to the Hall with beating heart and dark misgivings.

Sir Edward was in the library, but very busy, the servant said, in answer to my inquiry. He could not be too busy to see me, I thought, so I heeded not what else the man said, but went quickly to the library.

"Colonel Peterson is dead!" said Sir Edward eagerly when I burst into the room, "I am sorry I have broken my appointment, but these gentlemen," and he bowed to two whom I recognized as leading people in our little town, "have already honored me with a request that I shall supply his place. You had better go home now."

I felt sad as I walked home. It was wrong, however, I knew, to mind that Sir Edward seemed engrossed in this sudden prospect of entering the political field, where he longed to distinguish himself; and I made many resolutions not to think of my own claims, or to mind how I, for a while, might be discarded.

Our marriage was put off. Sir Edward was fully occupied with the chances of his election. Paul went up to London, and I begged him not to hasten home; for I determined to conquer the old feeling of loneliness which was creeping over me, and not to own its power by requiring him as a companion. Two or three days after he had left me, I was sitting in the evening reading in the drawing-room. The morning of that day had been sunny and bright; but, in the evening, a heavy, gray mist had closed round the dale, and sad feelings of depression had come over me. Edward had only been once to see me in my solitude; and, in that short visit, he had seemed abstracted and half-longing to be gone. I knew that, fair as his chance was, there was yet need for exertion, as two other candidates had come forward. I knew that he was much occupied; still it was difficult to keep my resolution of not minding how much he might seem to neglect me. The wind and rain sounded so dreary, and my heart was so heavy, that at length I buried my face in my hands and sobbed.

#### CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

A RING at the door startled me. I wiped away my tears. It must be Edward. How hasty and unjust I had been! I rose to meet him, but instead of Edward I saw Paul. "Helena," he said, before I had even time

to exclaim at his sudden appearance, or almost to notice his wet, disordered dress, "I have heard some dreadful news in London, and I have hastened straight home to tell you it—to warn and save you."

"O! tell me quickly, Paul," I gasped; "what is it? Do not stop to break it to me, but tell me. Anything is better than suspense."

"Bear it bravely then, Helena," he said; but he himself was pale and trembling, and as he continued, his voice sunk to a low, hoarse whisper,—"Sir Edward Stamford is Lawrence's murderer."

I uttered a fierce contradiction; and I felt defiantly indignant.

"Alas, Helena!" said Paul, "the person who told me—a Signor Corti—stood beside Lawrence as his second in the duel; but had promised him, as he lay dying, never to reveal by whose hand he fell; for the challenge had been tauntingly given, and the offence pitilessly avenged. The quarrel arose about some girl they both admired—a Miss Graham—and Lawrence knew, I suppose, what shame would clog his adversary's steps were his crime known."

"Yes, Lawrence's generosity would be true till death," I broke in, "but, O! that man must be deceiving us; it cannot be Sir Edward who has done this cruel deed."

"He showed me the letter, Helena, in which Lawrence asked him to be his second, and in which Sir Edward's name was mentioned. Nay, he had even the pistols with him in London, which had been Sir Edward's, and bore his crest and initials, for they had changed weapons before fighting. Lawrence's must be in Sir Edward's possession, no doubt; they were that clumsy old pair that my father had mended up for him."

"I have seen them," I said. Alas! I could no longer doubt Paul's statement; for, with fearful distinctness, the scene in the Hall-library flashed back upon my mind—the open drawer, the bright pistols, Sir Edward's face, rigid and white with alarm—and I wondered how even my trustful love could have blinded me to the truth for so long.

"Corti would never have broken his promise, Helena, if it had not been necessary to do so, to save you from marrying your brother's murderer. Report had told him what you were about to do."

"To save me from it," Paul," I exclaimed, "what do you mean?"

"Is it possible, you misunderstand me?" he said. "I mean that your duty and your natural affection ought to strengthen you to renounce Sir Edward. I can hardly believe that you will find it a difficult task," he added, bitterly, "not to love your brother's murderer."

"I cannot take back my love, Paul. I never gave it for any definite reason; it was sent like some blessed instinct, and now, though I shudder to think what he is, I cannot—cannot part from Edward. It may be wicked and unnatural of me; but I cannot!" Paul groaned aloud with horror. "Why did I ever allow this engagement?" he muttered to himself.

"Only think of the terrible remorse he must have suffered, dear Paul," I pleaded, trying to be calm.

"I cannot count, Helena, his so cruelly deceiving you, as remorse. No: you must and shall break off this engagement. His guilt has cancelled any promise you can have made him."

"I am stronger-hearted than I seem," I said; "and, although the whole world cry out and condemn me, I will stand by him, comforting him, and strengthening him to a right repentance. I know you can tear and keep me away now; but, when I am of age, I will spring free from you and return to Sir Edward."

I stood there firm and resolute. A deep pain was at my heart, and terror struggled with my love; but still it lived imperiously strong, bound up, as it seemed, with my life. Paul was silent.

"Good night," I said, and moved towards the door.

He detained me by the arm.

"Hear!" he said, and his voice was cruelly calm, "the determination to which your obstinacy forces me; and from which no earthly power shall make me flinch. If you persist in your refusal to break off with Sir Edward, I will make known his guilt in every home around. No child but shall point at him, and cry, 'Murderer!' no mother but shall pray that her daughter may not live to love like you. Do you think, Helena, that the people of Lichendale will then choose him, his name blood-stained and blackened, for their representative? They

will not—they shall not—if my words have power to move them. Murderer—deceiver as he is, what should it matter to him who has lost heaven, if this chance of earthly success escape him? I place it in your power to prevent this: make your choice."

#### CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

I STAGGERED up to my own room, and threw myself on the bed. I lay sobbing in the darkness till Paul heard me, and came to me. I would not listen to him; but turned away with angry dread. When he had left me, I rose from my bed, went to the open window, and, leaning out, strove to see through black vacancy the Hall, where Sir Edward was sleeping, ignorant of my wild despair. The night-air cooled my burning cheeks, and the peaceful silence, only broken by the roar of the distant tide, stilled my passionate grief. I knelt down and prayed. I prayed that my love might be unselfish, and that I might, if necessary, be strong enough to sacrifice my own happiness to his.

Slowly but surely the conviction stole upon me that, to do right, I must give him up. I tried to resist it. I grappled with it; but in vain. It mastered me. The impetuosity of his love had been trampled down by his ambition. I did not love him the less for this. It merely made me long that, when his ambition was gratified, I might be taught how to win back his first great love. Paul had acted with cruel and unerring foresight, when he had made the alternative of my refusing to give up Sir Edward the almost certain loss of his election, and he had rightly guessed the conclusion I should work out in my own mind. For I felt that Sir Edward, triumphant in his election, and carried by it into new scenes and society, would soon forget me, and any pain resigning me might at first cost him.

The dawn crept slowly on, and the great white lilies, that I had planted out in the garden to make it gay for Paul when I should be gone, grew into distinctness, pointing with their golden fingers towards heaven. I still knelt by the window, praying that I might not shrink from the sacrifice.

What Sir Edward answered, when Paul wrote to him to tell him of my determination to break off the engagement, I was never told exactly; but I fancy his reply consisted chiefly of thanks for the assurance, which I had made Paul promise to give, that his

secret should not escape through us. I had asked Paul to write, because I could not have borne to do so without giving any explanation, and the only true one would have bound Sir Edward in honor to hold to his engagement.

For several days after that terrible night I lay in a death-like stupor. The merry church-bells woke me from it.

"Is it my wedding-day to-day?" I asked, as I sickened back into half-consciousness.

"Oh, Miss Helena!" said Jane, who had watched with Paul by me, "I am right glad to hear your voice again. It's no wedding. The bells are ringing for Sir Edward—Sir Edward, Miss." She guessed rightly that name would rouse me. "He's won the election, and he's given the ringers a power o' money."

A flood of recollection was let loose. It was all too true! I turned my face to the wall—I wept bitter tears. "Oh! that I had a mother to comfort me."

#### CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

THREE years passed. As soon as I recovered from my illness I resumed my household duties. I even went out in the town, after I heard of Sir Edward's departure for London; for I knew that the longer it was deferred the more painful would it be to me to revisit the places which his presence had made so dear. I strove hard to conquer my grief. In the daytime, by constant occupation, to which I forced myself, I contrived to drive it from me; but, at night, when I was alone, it sprang from its hiding-place, like some horrid spectre, and stared me in the face with relentless eyes. Sir Edward seldom came to Lichendale, and, during these rare visits, I never left the house. His career in public was brilliant. Had I not paid for it dearly? Even in his absence he continued to do much good amongst his poorer tenants; and if ever, by chance, they forgot my past history and in my visits named him to me, it was with love and respect for his character. If, instead of receiving this approbation, he had been branded and condemned by the world, would he not have sunk in his own self-respect, and have verified the unjustly harsh opinion of the public?

My love for him never wavered. The recollection of those few happy weeks when I had been his, gradually became more and more dream-like; but my love continued un-

quenched. For many months Paul and I led a life of silent antagonism. Although I tried to forgive, I could not forget what he had done, and I do not think I considered enough how little he had ever understood, or even been capable of understanding my devotion to Sir Edward, or how much of his childish experiences had been calculated to increase his naturally harsh, unforgiving disposition. Hannah, loving Lawrence the most for his little winsome, sportful ways, had often unknowingly checked Paul's affectionate impulses. Once as I watched him reading, and noticed the lines of care and thought deepening on his face, I was startled into a painful consciousness of what a loveless life we led; only brother and sister to each other as we were. I was humbled by my sorrow, and I did not repress the thought that perhaps it was my fault for always striving and chafing against his will, instead of showing him a loving submission. With a sudden impulse I sprang up, and flung my arms round his neck. "I do love you, Paul," I murmured, "I really do." I feared he might put me coldly from him. I felt half ashamed that I had not restrained myself; but his low, "God bless you for this, Helena," dispelled all doubts, and thrilled me with joy. Those few words seemed to draw us closer together than I could once have deemed possible; and I strove my utmost to hold fast what I had gained by them.

#### CHAPTER THE NINTH.

ONE day I was returning slowly home, after a morning spent at the school, when I saw the doctor rush past me without a nod or word of recognition. A servant followed him, hot and out of breath. I glanced at the livery—it was Sir Edward's!

"Who is ill at the Hall?" I asked. The man, a stranger to me, stared at me; for, I suppose, I looked wild and eager.

"Sir Edward," he said, "he's got a fever. I told him last night he had better have the doctor, but he wouldn't listen to me, and now he'll want the doctor and the parson both."

Terror seemed to give me strength. I got to the Hall without stopping to think. I opened a side-door that I knew was left unlocked, and sprang up the wide stairs, and on—on—into Sir Edward's presence. A wild, ringing laugh greeted me—

"Ha! Helena!" he screamed in his de-

lirium, "is that you? and where is Lawrence?—poor, bleeding Lawrence!" His eyes glared with fever.

Paul stood at the bedside; brought there, face to face with his enemy, by a summons which he had not dared to disobey—a summons to give spiritual peace and comfort to one, who, the messenger had said, lay at the point of death. He saw me as I entered; but he did not send me away. The past was forgotten in that awful present.

Long, weary days of watching followed. Out-of-doors, I remember, everything was so bright and joyous in the summer-weather. All day the belling of the deer, and the low, sweet notes of birds calling to each other, came floating through the open window into the darkened room; and I could hear, too, the people passing through the park laughing gaily in the sunshine. It seemed as if the full measure of my misery, beneath the weight of which I thought my heart must surely break, were but a little drop of sorrow in the great stream of glad life, that eddied sparkling on, untroubled, unpitying. It was terrible to see Sir Edward suffer, and to be able to give him no relief; to hear him shriek in his delirium like one tormented, and have no power to soothe. Lawrence's death-scene seemed to haunt him like a ghastly vision. He mentioned his name perpetually, in rapid, incoherent sentences, that were sometimes half-Italian, and of which I could only guess the sad meaning. Often his voice sank to a low moaning for Helena; but, when I came forward and spoke to him—hoping that as at first he would recognize me—he shrunk shuddering away with shut eyes, seeing in me only my likeness to Lawrence; whose face, as he last looked upon it, was not, I think, more white and wild than mine became in those hours of misery.

It was during the second night of our watching that the physician, for whom Paul had telegraphed from London, arrived. I heard the hoarse grating of the carriage-wheels over the gravel. I knew that he was come, and with him, I hardly doubted, relief for Sir Edward. He came up-stairs immediately, and entered the room with a quiet, cautious tread. I could hardly bear the suspense of those moments. I crept out into the dark ante-room, and stood there straining with expectation, and vainly trying to forget that it was for a verdict of life or

death that I waited. Sir Edward's great dog left the side of the door, where he had lain ever since his master had been taken ill, and came to me with a strange, piteous whine.

At length the physician left the patient's room, and Paul followed him, pressing him for an opinion. They did not see me standing there in the faint moonlight, and I was too anxious, too eager, to move; so they spoke out the cruel truth plainly, and I drank in their words as some poor creature mad with thirst, might snatch and swallow poison.

"Did you say there was no hope?" said Paul. My breath came and went quick.

"Not a shadow," the physician replied; "I do not see a chance of recovery with that pulse, and I am not apt to give up a case. You haven't gained much by bringing me down here, you see," he added, lightly, as he and Paul passed on into the gallery.

I tried to go towards the room; but my strength failed. I sank to the ground like one paralysed. As I crouched there, in the darkness, I heard my name loaded with reproaches. In delirious anguish my faithlessness was denounced for killing its victim, and, in that manner, avenging Lawrence. These reproaches had enough of terrible sense in them to sound more than mere ravings. But, through the tumult of my grief, holy words of promise rose to my remembrance—"Ask, and it shall be given unto you." I raised my hands in an agony of supplication, and prayed for Edward's recovery with intense longing.

I do not know why I longed for it so earnestly, remembering always as I did that when he got well I must leave him. I suppose I had unconsciously some expectation that, if he lived, he would in some way learn how true I had been to him; and, before death, give me one word or look of gratitude. I rose, strengthened and comforted, and went to him.

The crisis of the fever passed. Sir Edward's strength had been spent in the fury of his delirium, and he lay prostrate and weak as a little child; but he lived, my prayers were heard. Death had hovered very near; but at His commands, he spread his black pinions and fled. I watched on day and night by Sir Edward till he was out of danger, and his consciousness returned.



Then Paul bade me go home, and there was a gentle pity in his voice that filled my heart with a new hope.

He still stayed at the Hall, nursing Sir Edward. Twice or three times every day he sent me short bulletins; and, on the expectation of these, I seemed to live. Each day Sir Edward was getting better. Each day I felt sure that Paul's heart was softening towards him, and yearning more and more to proffer forgiveness. One day (it was more than a week after the crisis) Paul's note was longer than it had ever been before.

"I have told Sir Edward everything—my threat which Heaven has taught me to repent, and your sacrifice. His joy when I told him why you had parted from him, was so great that I was quite afraid lest its effects should throw him back. I must tell you what he says; for, at present it would be dangerous for him to see you. He declares, that I was quite deceived in thinking that he felt no remorse in meeting us; and that it was only from a strong desire to make every reparation in his power, that, by giving me this living, he insured our home so near his. He says, that he had a shuddering reluctance to meet those whom he had so deeply injured; but that, directly he had seen you, he felt it impossible to stop his intercourse with us. He blames himself bitterly for the sorrow he has caused you by the cowardly concealment of his crime when he engaged himself to you. When he heard of your determination to part from him, he naturally concluded that it resulted from indignation at his conduct, with which I had told him we were acquainted. But he now knows how it all was. He says, that ever since then he has been making most

earnest efforts to subdue the passionate heat of temper which drove him to his crime; but that he had determined not to plead for your forgiveness till he could prove, by his having conquered his evil disposition, that he had striven hard to earn it. These are nearly his words. I believe that he meant to have seen you, to tell you all this himself, during this visit to Lichendale; and that his anxiety as to your answer, in great measure, brought on the fever. His repentance has been bitter; but a day of gladness has dawned.—Yours, P. M."

My tears fell fast and thick as I finished this letter, but through them I saw Lawrence's eyes shining from his portrait on the wall,—bright and glad, and it seemed to me as if his spirit spoke through them, rejoicing with me, and sanctioning my perfect happiness.

"Helena," said Sir Edward to me the other day, "miserable as those three years were, even if it were possible, I would not have them undone. They taught me how precious you were; and, in striving to win you back, my love for you helped me to overcome evil in many a fierce conflict."

"That time has done us all good," I said. "It made Paul and me love each other, as we should never otherwise have done. I see now how sorrow is sent with divinely merciful purposes."

"O baby, baby," said Edward, catching up our little girl from the floor, "we will never let you marry such a wicked man as Sir Edward Stamford, though mamma has done so,—will we?"

**CHALK SUNDAY.**—In the west of Ireland nine-tenths of the marriages that take place among the peasantry are celebrated the week before Lent, and particularly on Shrove Tuesday, on which day the Roman Catholic priests have hard work to get through all their duties. On the first Sunday in Lent it is usual for the girls slyly to chalk the coats of those young men who have allowed the preceding festival to pass without having made their choice of a partner; and "illigible" young men strut about with affected unconsciousness of the numerous stripes which decorate their backs, while boys just arrived at manhood hold their heads higher, and show tokens of great satisfaction, if any good-natured

lass affixes the coveted mark.—*Notes and Queries.*

**BUTLER AND CHATTERTON.**—

"One of the Chaplains of the Bishop of Exeter has found a line of Rowley in Hudibras." Horace Walpole to Cole, June 19, 1777.—*Historical and Literary Curiosities*, by Charles John Smith.

Can any one of your readers direct me to the line, or inform me who was the chaplain? Has the letter from which the above extract is taken been published in any of the collections of Horace Walpole's Correspondence? H. J.

—*Notes and Queries.*

From The Times 8 July.

# CHINA.

WITH the approaching close of the Parliamentary Session must revive the interest in those distant regions of the East where the forces of more than one nation are gathering. Probably by the time the autumn tourists are once more settled at home, and busy with their old occupations, we shall learn that our troops have encamped on Chinese ground and that our gunboats are ascending the great rivers to exact reparation for the insults of a year before. The acts of our commanders it is impossible and would be useless to predict. In such matters the events, resources, and opportunities of the hour must guide those who have the conduct of affairs, and success is often best insured by the absence of a plan which may have been faulty in conception, or may at least prove inapplicable to some unexpected state of things. All that it is necessary to establish beforehand is the general policy which is to rule our future dealings with the Chinese empire. What Lord Elgin is to demand, and not how the General and the Admiral are to enforce his demands, is the subject on which there should be no misunderstanding. Now, before discussing this point it may be as well to examine the opinions which other nations hold with regard to our proceedings. The judgment of the Americans as given through their press, and by the Minister they are about to despatch to China, is certainly most favorable to the claims of this country and the spirit in which they have been urged. The conduct of Lord Palmerston could not have been more approved at home than in New York and Boston, and the verdict which his own countrymen gave against his antagonists has been ratified by a people who have had their own experience of barbarian insolence and cruelty. From the other great Power which has promised us its support the judgment of approval is equally decided. We do not speak of factions and their representatives in the press and in society, but of the moderate and honest, who place the well-being of their country above the successes of party. Among the publications which are left in France the *Revue des Deux Mondes* stands in the highest rank, and an article which appeared in one of its late numbers places in a just light the present situation of China,

the excesses of its officials, and the necessity of European interference. This article, though bearing another signature, is understood to be the work of an Orleanist Prince, whose warlike tendencies and plans for the supremacy of the French marine were the objects of no little curiosity some years since. However, like many others, he has learnt to do justice to the nation which formerly excited his jealousy; mature years and the calamities of his family have brought with them soberness and a chastened judgment. The author begins by acknowledging the decline of the Chinese Empire and the necessity of its fall. The system to which almost every philosopher of the past century offered his ignorant praises is now discovered to be only a hierarchy of imbecility and wickedness. The seclusion of the Emperor, who knows nothing that passes beyond the limits of Peking; the corruption of the Mandarins, who buy their places, and of course sell justice and employment; the gross sensuality which prevails among all classes; the carelessness of human life, resulting in incessant executions, in systematic infanticide, and in the application of torture on every pretence, are all proofs of the inability of the Chinese civilization to struggle any longer with the energy that is at its gates. Add to this that a great part of the Empire is in possession of the extraordinary army of rebels which has now for some years attracted the attention of Europe, and it will hardly be denied that the intercourse of Europeans with such a people must sooner or later lead to conflicts, in which the less civilized nation will be the offending party.

So for many years the late events have been preparing. The British have been pushing on their trade at all ports of China and the Archipelago; the Chinese themselves have been pouring out their crowded country to Anglo-saxon settlements in various parts of the globe; the two peoples have been brought face to face, and the mingled fear and vanity of the Chinese have led them into the acts of violence for which atonement is demanded. With regard, then, to the justice of the English cause the author has no doubt. The English power has been seriously offended, and will impose a fitting retribution; the only thing to be decided is whether France shall join us in our operations. Shall the French, to use the electoral

term, "abstain," or shall they co-operate in an enterprise which they cannot prevent, and which they ought not to desire to prevent? The author declares for co-operation on a scale consistent with the strength and dignity of France. England, he says, has requested France and the United States to act in concert with her. "It would be unfortunate if the appeal were not heard. The right would thenceforth be given to England of bringing to a conclusion this great affair, and appropriating to herself all the results. In spite of herself the world would have forced her to accomplish in China something like what she had accomplished in India. After having exacted vengeance for the savage acts committed at Canton, we should see her occupy the Isle of Chusan, and perhaps Formosa, the coal mines of which promise an abundant source of riches." To avert this danger France should join us in whatever we do, and no English gunboat should be seen at any point of the coast without a French double volunteering its friendly but watchful assistance. Then would come a treaty, by which the Powers engaged in the operations "should engage to exercise on China a moral and material influence, in order to obtain for Europeans the right to travel, trade, reside, and possess property on all points of the empire, with the right also of professing and teaching their religion. The allies would engage equally to acquire no point of Chinese territory without the consent of all, and to extend the rights of a European subject to no Chinese without the accomplishment of certain conditions arranged in common." Such is the programme to which the writer desires that England and his own country should agree.

Now, on many points we cordially acquiesce in these opinions. Let France, let the United States, have their full share in the advantages which must attend the opening of the Chinese empire. The American trade is large and will be larger; San Francisco is on the other side of the Ocean, and we have no wish to deny the interests and the legitimate influence of the Republic. Let France also do all that she wishes. In default of commerce or political relations with China, she asserts the protectorate of

the Catholic religion and the care of European civilization. Be it so. When all nations have a free right to enter China, Catholic priests will benefit like the rest, and any arrangement which the authorities of the Church may make with the French Emperor for placing those missionaries under the protection of his Ambassador will meet no obstacle from us. But from the latter part of the plan we entirely dissent. We have asked the concert of other Powers in order to assist our operations, and not to impede them. If we are to send fleets and armies to the Chinese Seas with a precedent arrangement that we are to occupy no spot of ground and grant naturalization to no Chinese, in Hongkong, Singapore, or Sydney, we might as well keep our troops at home and save our money. We have been injured, our flag insulted, our Plenipotentiary refused justice, and our fellow-citizens shot, strangled, and poisoned by a set of barbarians and their chiefs. For these outrages the British Government is about to take satisfaction. Believing, however, that the interests of humanity and civilization might be advanced by a proper use of this opportunity we have freely offered to other nations a share in the operations on which we have decided. As we acted fifteen years ago we propose to act now. Then England gave to all nations an equal share in the advantages she had gained by an expensive war, and now an expedition of which we shall bear the chief burden will bring rich gains to every nation which has the energy to use the new opportunities. But any one who expects us to bind ourselves to conditions totally mistakes the intentions of the English Government and the spirit in which its request of co-operation was made. Should the occupation of Chusan, or of any point on the mainland, conduce to the attainment of the objects of the war, we see no reason why it should not be occupied. Let France also have her settlement, if she wishes it—we shall have no objection—but let her not seek to restrict us. The conquest of China is, of course, out of the question, but that one or more European peoples should possess settlements on the Eastern Coast of Asia seems to us no very monstrous proposition.

From The National Review

# LORD BROUGHAM.

*Works of Henry Lord Brougham, F. R. S.,  
Member of the National Institute of France  
and the Royal Academy of Naples. London  
and Glasgow: Griffin and Co.*

It was a bold, perhaps a rash idea, to collect the writings of Henry Brougham. They were written at such distant dates; their subjects are so various; they are often so wedged into the circumstances of an age,—that they scarcely look natural in a series of volumes. Some men, doubtless, by a strong grasp of intellect, have compacted together subjects as various; the finger-marks of a few are on all human knowledge; others, by a rare illuminative power, have lit up as many with a light that seems peculiar to themselves; *Franciscus Baconus sic cogitavit* may well illustrate an *opera omnia*. But Lord Brougham has neither power; his restless genius has no claim to the still illuminating imagination; his many-handed, apprehensive intelligence is scarcely able to fuse and concentrate. Variety is his taste, and versatility his power. His career has not been quiet. For many years rushing among the details of an age, he has written as he ran. There are not many undertakings bolder than to collect the works of such a life and such a man.

The edition itself seems a good one. The volumes are convenient in size, well printed, and fairly arranged. The various writings it contains have been revised, but not over-revised, by their author. It is not, however, of the collection that we wish to speak. We would endeavor, so far as a few hasty pages may serve, to delineate the career and character of the writer. The attempt is among the most difficult. He is still among us; we have not the materials, possibly not the impartiality, of posterity. Nor have we the familiar knowledge of contemporaries; the time when Lord Brougham exerted his greatest faculties is beyond the political memory of younger men. There are no sufficient books on the events of a quarter of a century ago, we have only traditions; and this must be our excuse if we fall, or may seem to fall, into error and confusion.

The years immediately succeeding the great peace were years of sullenness and difficulty. The idea of the war had passed away; the thrill and excitement of the great

struggle were no longer felt. We had maintained, with the greatest potentate of modern times, a successful contest for existence; we had our existence, but we had no more; our victory had been great, but it had no fruits. By the aid of pertinacity and capital, we had vanquished genius and valor; but no visible increase of European influence followed. Napoleon said, that Wellington had made peace as if he had been defeated. We had delivered the Continent; such was our natural idea; but the continent went its own way. There was nothing in its state to please the every-day Englishman. There were kings and emperors; "which was very well for foreigners, they had always been like that; but it was not many kings could pay ten per cent income-tax." Absolutism, as such, cannot be popular in a free country. The Holy Alliance which made a religion of despotism, was scarcely to be reconciled with the British constitution. Altogether we had vanquished Napoleon, but we had no pleasure in what came after him. The cause which agitated our hearts was gone; there was no longer a noise of victories in the air; continental affairs were dead, despotic, dull; we scarcely liked to think that we had made them so; with weary dissatisfaction we turned to our own condition.

This was profoundly unsatisfactory. Trade was depressed; agriculture ruinous; the working classes disaffected. During the war, our manufacturing industry had grown most rapidly; there was a not unnatural expectation, that after a general peace, the rate of increase would be accelerated. The whole continent, it was considered, would be opened to us; Milan and Berlin decrees no longer excluded us; Napoleon did not now interpose between "the nation of shopkeepers" and its customers; now he was at St. Helena, surely those customers would buy? It was half-forgotten that they could not. The drain of capital for the war had been, at times, heavily felt in England; there had been years of poverty and discredit; still our industry had gone on, our workshops had not stopped. We had never known what it was to be the seat of war as well as a power at war. We had never known our burdens enormously increased, just when our industry was utterly stopped; disarranged as trading credit sometimes was, it had not been destroyed. No conscription had drained us of our most efficient



consumers. The Continent, south and north, had, though not everywhere alike, suffered all these evils; its population were poor, harassed, depressed. They could not buy our manufactures, for they had no money. The large preparations for a continental export lay on hand; our traders were angry and displeased. Nor was content to be found in the agricultural districts. During the war, the British farmer had inevitably a monopoly of this market; at the approach of peace, his natural antipathy to foreign corn influenced the legislature. The Home Secretary of the time had taken into consideration, whether 76s. or 80s. was such a remunerating price as the agriculturist should obtain, and a corn-law had passed accordingly. But no law could give the farmer famine-prices, when there was scarcity here and plenty abroad. There were riots at the passing of the "Bread-tax" as it was; in 1813, the price of corn was 120s.; the rural mind was sullen in 1816, when it sunk to 57s. The protection given, though unpopular with the poor, did not satisfy the farmer.

The lower orders in the manufacturing districts were, of necessity, in great distress. The depression of trade produced its inevitable results of closed mills and scanty employment. Wages, when they could be obtained, were very low. The artisan population was then new to the vicissitudes of industry: how far they are, even now, instructed in the laws of trade, recent prosperity will hardly let us judge; but, at that time, they had no doubt that it was the fault of the State, and if not of particular statesmen, then of the essential institutions that they were in want. They believed the Government ought to regulate their remuneration, and make it sufficient. During some straitened years of the war, the name of "Luddites" became known. They had principally shown their discontent by breaking certain machines, which they fancied deprived them of work. After the peace, the records of the time are full of "Spencean Philanthropists," "Hampden Clubs," and similar associations, all desiring a great reform—some of mere politics, others of the law of property and social economy. Large meetings were every where held, something like those of the year 1839: a general insurrection, doubtless a wild dream of a few hot-brained dreamers, was fancied to have been

really planned. The name "Radical" came to be associated with this discontent. The spirit which, in after-years, clamored distinctly for the five points of the Charter, made itself heard in mutterings and threatenings.

Nor were the capitalists, who had created the new wealth, socially more at ease. Many of them, as large employers of labor, had a taste for Toryism; the rule of the people to them meant the rule of their work-people. Some of the wealthiest and most skilful became associated with the aristocracy; but it was in vain with the majority to attempt it. Between them and the possessors of hereditary wealth, there was fixed a great gulf; the contrast of habits, speech, manners, was too wide. The two might coincide in particular opinions; they might agree to support the same institutions; they might set forth, in a Conservative creed, the same form of sound words; but, though the abstract conclusions were identical, the mode of holding them—to borrow a subtlety of Father Newman's—was exceedingly different. The refined, discriminating, timorous immobility of the aristocracy was distinct from the coarse, dogmatic, keep-downishness of the manufacturer. Yet more marked was the contrast, when the opposite tendencies of temperament had produced, as they soon could not but do, a diversity of opinion. The case was not quite new in England. Mr. Burke spoke of the tendency of the first East Indians to Jacobinism. They could not, he said, bear that their present importance should have no proportion to their recently-acquired riches. No extravagant fortunes have, in this century, been made by Englishmen in India; but Lancashire has been a California. Families have been created there, whose names we all know, which we think of when we mention wealth; some of which are now, by lapse of time, passing into the hereditary caste of recognized opulence. This, however, has been a work of time; and, before it occurred, there was no such intermediate class between the new wealth and the old. "It takes," it is said that Sir Robert Peel observed, "three generations to make a gentleman." In the mean time, there was an inevitable misunderstanding; the new cloth was too coarse for the old. Besides this, many actual institutions offended the eyes of the middle class. The state

of the law was opposed both to their prejudices and interests; that you could only recover your debts by spending more than the debt, was hard; and the injury was aggravated, the money was spent in "special pleading"—"in putting a plain thing so as to perplex and mislead a plain man." "Lord Eldon and the Court of Chancery," as Sydney Smith expressed it, "sat heavy on mankind." The existence of slavery in our colonies, strongly supported by a strong aristocratic and parliamentary influence, offended the principles of middle-class Christianity, and the natural sentiments of simple men. The cruelty of the penal law—the punishing with death sheep-stealing and shop-lifting—jarred the humanity of that second order of English society, which, from their habits of reading and non-reading, may be called, *par excellence*, the scriptural classes. The routine harshness of a not very wise executive did not mitigate the feeling. The *modus operandi* of Government appeared coarse and oppressive.

We seemed to pay, too, a good deal for what we did not like. At the close of the war, the ten per cent income-tax was of course heavily oppressive. The public expenditure was beyond argument lavish; and it was spent in pensions, sinecures ("them idlers" in the speech of Lancashire), and a mass of sundries, that an economical man of business will scarcely admit to be necessary, and that even now, after countless prunings, produce periodically "financial reform associations," "administrative leagues," and other combinations which amply testify the enmity of thrifty efficiency to large figures and muddling management. There had remained from the eighteenth century a tradition of corruption, an impression that direct pecuniary malversation pervaded the public offices; an idea true in the days of Rigby or Bubb Dodington, but which, like many other impressions, continued to exist many years after the facts in which it originated had passed away. Government, in the hands of such a man as Lord Liverpool, was very different from Government in the hands of Sir Robert Walpole: respectability was exacted: of actual money-taking there was hardly any. Still, especially among inferior officials, there was something to shock modern purity. The size of jobs was large: if the Treasury of that time

could be revived, it would be depressed at the littleness of whatever is perpetrated in modern administration. There were petty abuses too in the country—in municipalities—in charitable trusts—in all outlying public moneys, which seemed to the offended man of business, who saw them with his own eyes, evident instances confirming his notion of the malpractices of Downing Street. "There are only five little boys in the school of Richester; they may cost £200 and the income is £2000 and the trustees don't account for the balance; which is the way things are done in England: we keeps an aristocracy," &c. The whole of this feeling concentrated into a detestation of rotten boroughs. The very name was enough: that Lord Dovour, with two patent sinecures in the Exchequer and a good total for assisting in nothing at the Audit Office, should return two members for one house, while Birmingham, where they made buttons,—“as good buttons as there are in the world, Sir,”—returned no members at all, was an evident indication that Reform was necessary. Mr. Canning was an eloquent man; but “even he could not say that a decaying stump was the *people*.” Gatton and Old Sarum became unpopular. The source of power seemed absurd, and the use of power was tainted. Side by side with the incipient Chartism of the Northern operative, there was growing daily more distinct and clear the Manchester philosophy, which has since expressed itself in the Anti-corn-law League, and which, for good and evil, is now an element so potent in our national life. Both creeds were forms of discontent. And the counterpoise was wanting. The English constitution has provided that there shall always be one estate raised above the storms of passion and controversy, which all parties may respect and honor. The King is to be loved. But this theory requires, for a real efficiency, that the throne be filled by such a person as can be loved. In those times it was otherwise. The nominal possessor of the crown was a very old man, whom an incurable malady had long sequestered from earthly things. The actual possessor of the royal authority was a voluptuary of overgrown person, now too old for healthy pleasure, and half-sickened himself at the corrupt pursuits in which, nevertheless, he indulged perpetually. His domestic

vices had become disgracefully public. Whatever might be the truth about Queen Caroline, no one could say she had been well treated. There was no loyalty on which suffering workers, or an angry middle class, could repose: all through the realm there was a miscellaneous agitation, a vague and wandering discontent.

The official mind of the time was troubled. We have a record of its speculations in the life of Lord Sidmouth, who more than any one perhaps embodied it. He had been Speaker, and was much inclined to remedy the discontent of the middle classes by "naming them to the House." A more conscientious man perhaps has never filled a public position. If the forms of the House of Commons had been intuitively binding, no one could have obeyed them better: the "mace" was a "counsel of perfection" to him; all disorder hateful. In the Home Office it was the same. The Luddites were people who would not obey the Speaker. Constituted authority must be enforced. The claims of a suffering multitude were not so much neglected as unappreciated. A certain illiberality, as we should now speak, pervades the whole kind of thought. The most striking feature is an indisposition, which by long indulgence has become an inability, to comprehend another person's view, to put oneself in another's mental place, to think what he thinks, to conceive what he inevitably is. Lord Sidmouth referred to the file. He found that Mr. Pitt had put down disaffection by severe measures. Accordingly, he suspended the Habeas-Corpus Act, passed six Acts, commended a Peterloo massacre, not with conscious unfeelingness, but from an absorbed officiality, from a knowledge that this was what "the department" had done before, and an inference that this must be done again. As for the reforming ideas of the middle classes, red tape had never tied up such notions: perhaps it was the French Revolution over again: you could not tolerate them.

Between such a dominant mind as this, and such a subject mind as has been described, there was a daily friction. The situation afforded obvious advantages to enterprising men. Its peculiarity did not escape the shrewd eyes of John Lord Eldon. "If," said the Conservative Chancellor, "I were to begin life again, d—n my eyes,

but I would begin as an agitator." Henry Brougham did so begin. During the war he had distinguished himself in the exposition of the grievances of the trading interest. Our Government had chosen a mode of carrying it on specially fitted to injure our commerce. "Napoleon had said, that no vessel should touch a British port, and then enter a French one, or one under French control. The Orders in Council said, that no vessel whatever should enter any such port without having first touched at some port of Great Britain." The natural results were the annihilation of our trade with the Continent, and a quarrel with the United States. The merchants of the country were alarmed at both consequences. Perhaps until then men hardly knew how powerful our trading classes had become. Meetings were held in populous places; petitions in great numbers—an impressive and important thing in those times—were presented. Wherever foreign commerce existed, the discontent expressed itself in murmurs. The forms of the House of Commons were far more favorable than they now are to an action from without; and this is not unnatural, since there had been as yet but few actions from without, and it had not been necessary to have a guard against them. The petitions, as has been said, were numerous; and on the presentation of each there was a speech from the member presenting it, trying to bring on a debate, and suggesting topics which might irritate the ministry and convince the country. Mr. Brougham was always in his place.\* "Hardly an hour passed without detecting some false statement or illogical argument; hardly a night passed without gaining some convert to the cause of truth." The result was decisive.

"Although opposed by the whole weight of the Government both in public and out of doors; although at first vigorously resisted by the energy, the acuteness, the activity, and the expertness, which made Mr. Perceval one of the first debaters of his day; although, after his death, the father of the system, with all his fire and with his full knowledge of the subject,—nay, although" the Ministry risked their existence on the question, the victory remained with the

\* This and the following quotations are from the Speeches of Lord Brougham and the Introduction to them, published in 1838; the latter were written by himself.

petitioners. The Orders in Council were abolished, and the efficacy of agitation proved. "The session of 1816 offered an example yet more remarkable of the same tactics being attended with signal success. On the termination of the war, the Government were determined, instead of repealing the whole income-tax, which the law declared to be "for and during the continuance of the war, and no longer," to "retain one-half of it." "As soon as this intention was announced, several meetings were held." Some petitions were presented. Mr. Brougham declared that, if the motion "were pressed on Thursday, he should avail himself of the forms of the House." Of course the unpopularity of paying money was decisive: the income-tax fell. The same faculty of aggression, which had been so successful in these instances, was immediately so applied as to give voice to the sullenness of the country; to express forms of discontent as real, though not with an object as determinate. Mr. Brougham did not understate his case: "There is one branch of the subject which I shall pass over altogether,—I mean the *amount* of the distresses which are now universally admitted to prevail over almost every part of the empire. Upon this topic all men are agreed; the statements connected with it are as unquestionable as they are afflicting." Nor did he shrink from detail. "I shall suppose," he observed to the House, "a farm of 400 acres of fair good land, yielding a rent of from £500 to £600 a-year." "It will require a four years' course,—200 acres being in corn, 100 in fallow, and 100 in hay and grass;" and he seems to prove that at least it ought not to answer, "independently of the great rise in lime and all sorts of manure." The commercial mania of the time takes its turn in the description. "After the cramped state in which the enemy's measures and our own retaliation (as we termed it) had kept our trade for some years, when the events of spring 1814 suddenly opened the Continent, a rage for exporting goods of every kind burst forth, only to be explained by reflecting on the previous restrictions we had been laboring under, and only to be equalled (though not in extent) by some of the mercantile delusions connected with South American speculations. Every thing that could be shipped

was sent off; all the capital that could be laid hold of was embarked. The frenzy, I can call it nothing less, after the experience of 1806 and 1810, descended to persons in the humblest circumstances, and the farthest removed, by their pursuits, from commercial cares. It may give the committee some idea of this disease, if I state what I know to have happened in one or two places. Not only clerks and laborers, but menial servants, engaged the little sums which they had been laying up for a provision against old age and sickness; persons went round tempting them to adventure in the trade to Holland, and Germany, and the Baltic; they risked their mite in the hopes of boundless profits; it went with the millions of the more regular traders: the bubble soon burst, like its predecessors of the South Sea, the Mississippi, and Buenos Ayres; English goods were selling for much less in Holland and the north of Europe, than in London and Manchester; in most places they were lying a dead weight without any sale at all; and either no returns whatever were received, or pounds came back for thousands that had gone forth. The great speculators broke; the middling ones lingered out a precarious existence, deprived of all means of continuing their dealings either at home or abroad; the poorer dupes of the delusion had lost their little boards, and went upon the parish the next mishap that befel them; but the result of the whole has been much commercial distress—a caution now absolutely necessary in trying new adventures—a prodigious diminution in the demand for manufactures, and indirectly a serious defalcation in the effectual demand for the produce of land." Next year he described as the worst season ever known. The year 1812, a year before esteemed one of much suffering, rose in comparison to one of actual prosperity. He began with the "clothing, a branch of trade which, from accidental circumstances, is not as depressed as our other great staples;" he passed to the iron trade, &c. &c. He dilated on the distress, the discontent, and suffering of the people. Of course the Government were to blame. He moved that the "unexampled" difficulties of trade and manufactures were "materially increased by the policy pursued with respect to our foreign commerce,—that the continuance of these difficulties is in a great degree owing



to the severe pressure of taxation under which the country labors, and which ought by every practicable means to be lightened, —that the system of foreign policy pursued by his Majesty's ministers has not been such as to obtain for the people of this country those commercial advantages which the influence of Great Britain in foreign countries fairly entitled them to expect." As became a pupil of the Edinburgh University, Mr. Brougham was not averse to political economy. He was ready to discuss the theory of rent or the corn-laws. He made a speech, which he relates as having had a greater success than any other which he made in Parliament, in support of Mr. Calcraft's amendment, to "substitute £192,638 4s. 9d. for £385,276 9s. 6d., the estimate for the household troops." Foreign policy was a favorite topic. Almost unsupported, as he said some years after, he attacked the Holy Alliance. Looking back through the softening atmosphere of reminiscence, he almost seems to have a kindness for Lord Castlereagh. He remembers with pleasure the utter "courage with which he exposed himself unabashed to the most critical audience in the world, while incapable of uttering anything but the meanest matter, expressed in the most wretched language;" nor has he "forgotten the kind of pride that mantled on the fronts of the Tory phalanx, when, after being overwhelmed with the fire of the Whig Opposition, or galled by the fierce denunciations of the Mountain, or harassed by the splendid displays of Mr. Canning, their chosen leader stood forth, and presenting the graces of his eminently patrician figure, flung open his coat, displayed an azure ribbon traversing a snow-white chest, and declared "his high satisfaction that he could now meet the charges against him face to face, and repel with indignation all that his adversaries had been bold and rash enough to advance." But the "Mr. Brougham" of that time showed no admiration; no denunciations were stronger than his; no sarcasm impinged more deeply; if the "noble lord in the blue ribbon" wished any one out of the House, the "man from the Northern Circuit" was probably that one. Kings and emperors met with little mercy: and later years have shown how little was merited by the petty absolutism and unthinking narrowness of

that time. That Mr. Brougham indissolubly connected the education movement with his name every body knows; but scarcely any one remembers how unpopular that movement was. Mr. Windham had said, some years before, "That the diffusion of knowledge was proper might be supported by many good arguments; but he confessed he was a sceptic on that point. It was said, Look at the state of the savages as compared with ours. A savage among savages was *very well*, and the difference was only perceived when he came to be introduced into civilized society." "His friend, Dr. Johnson, was of opinion that it was not right to teach reading beyond a certain extent in society." The same feeling continued. Mr. Peel, in his blandest tones, attacked the education committee. Lord Stowell, not without sagacity, observed, "If you provide a larger amount of highly-cultivated talent than there is a demand for, the surplus is very likely to turn sour." Such were the sentiments of some of the best scholars of that era; and so went all orthodox sentiment. That education was the same as republicanism, and republicanism as infidelity, half the curates believed. But in spite of all this opposition, perhaps with more relish on account of it, Mr. Brougham was ever ready. He was a kind of prophet of knowledge. His voice was heard in the streets. He preached the gospel of the alphabet; he sang the praises of the primer all the day long. "Practical observations," "discourses," "speeches," exist, terrible to all men now. To the kind of education then advocated there may be objections. We may object to the kind of "knowledge" then most sought after; but there can be no doubt that those who then labored in its behalf must be praised for having inculcated, in the horrid heat of the day, as a boring paradox what is now a boring commonplace. Our space would fail us if we were to attempt to recount his labors on the slavery question, on George IV. and Queen Caroline, or his hundred encounters with the routine statesmen. The series commenced at the Peace; but it continued for many years. Is not its history written in the chronicles of Parliament? You must turn the leaves—no unpleasant reading—of those old debates, and observe how often Mr. Brougham's name occurs, and on what

cumbrous subjects, before you can estimate the frequency of his attacks and the harassing harshness of his labor. One especial subject was his more than any other man's—Law reform. He had Romilly and Mackintosh as fellow-laborers in the amelioration of the penal code; he had their support, and that of some others, in his incessant narrations of the grievances of individuals, and denunciations of the unfeeling unthinkingness of our Home administration; but no man grappled so boldly—we had almost said so coarsely—with the crude complexities of our civil jurisprudence: a rougher nature, a more varied knowledge of action than we must expect of philanthropists were needed for that task. The subject was most difficult to deal with. The English commerce and civilization had grown up in the meshes of a half-feudal code, further complicated with the curious narrowness and spirit of chicanery which haunt every where the law-courts of early times. The technicality which produced the evil made the remedy more difficult. There was no general public opinion on the manner of reform; the public felt the evil, but no one could judge of the efficacy of a remedy, save persons studious in complicated learning, who would hardly be expected to show how that learning could be rendered useless,—hardly, indeed, to imagine a world in which it did not exist. The old creed, that these ingenious abuses were the last “perfection of reason,” still lingered. It must give Lord Brougham some pride to reflect how many of the improvements which he was the first to popularise, if not to suggest, have been adopted,—how many old abuses of detail, which he first indicated to Parliament, exist no longer,—how many more are now admitted by every body to be abuses, though the mode of abolition is contested. The speech on Law reform which he published in the collected edition of his speeches, is nearly a summary of all that has been done or suggested in common or civil law reform for the last thirty years. The effect which so bold an attack on so many things by a single person produced in that conservative time was prodigious. “There never was such a nuisance as the man is,” said an old lawyer whom we knew; and he expressed the feeling of his profession. If we add, that beside all these minor reforms and secondary agitations, Mr. Brough-

ham was a bold advocate of Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform—the largest heresies of that epoch—we may begin to understand the sarcasm of Mr. Canning: “The honorable and learned gentleman having, in the course of his parliamentary life, supported or proposed *almost every species of innovation* which could be practised on the constitution, it was not very easy for Ministers to do anything without seeming to borrow from him. Break away in what direction they would, whether to the right or to the left, it was all alike. ‘Oh,’ said the honorable gentleman, ‘I was there before you; you would not have thought of that if I had not given you a hint.’ In the reign of Queen Anne, there was a sage and grave critic of the name of Dennis, who in his old age got it into his head that he had written all the good plays which were acted at that time. At last a tragedy came forth with a most imposing display of hail and thunder. At the first peal, Dennis exclaimed: ‘That is my thunder!’ So with the honorable and learned gentleman; there was no noise astir for the good of mankind in any part of the world, but he instantly claimed it for his thunder.” We may have wearied our readers with these long references to old conflicts, but it was necessary. We are familiar with the aberrations of the ex-Chancellor; we forget how bold, how efficacious, how varied was the activity of Henry Brougham.

There are several qualities in his genius which make such a life peculiarly suited to him. The first of these is an aggressive impulsive disposition. Most people may admit that the world goes ill? old abuses seem to exist, questionable details to abound. Hardly any one thinks that any thing may not be made better. But how to improve the world to repair the defects, is a difficulty. Immobility is a part of man. A sluggish conservatism is the basis of our English nature. “*Learn, my son,*” said the satirist, “to bear tranquilly the calamities of others.” We easily learn it. Most men have a line of life, and it imposes certain duties which they fulfil; but they cannot be induced to start out of that line. We dwell in “a firm basis of content.” “Let the mad world go its own way, for it will go its own way.” There is no doctrine of the English Church more agreeable to

our instinctive taste than that which forbids all works of supererogation. "You did a thing without being obliged," said an eminent Statesman; "then that must be wrong." We travel in the track. Lord Brougham is the opposite of this. It is not difficult to him to attack abuses. The more difficult thing for him would be to live in a world without abuses. An intense excitability is in his nature. He must "go off." He is eager to reform corruption, and rushes out to refute error. A tolerant placidity is altogether denied to him.

And not only is this excitability eager, it is many-sided. The men who have in general exerted themselves in labors for others, have generally been rather of a brooding nature: certain ideas, views, and feelings have impressed themselves on them in solitude; they come forth with them among the crowd: but they have no part in its diversified life. They are almost irritated by it. They have no conception except of their cause; they are abstracted in one thought, pained in the dizziness of a heated idea. There is nothing of this in Brougham. He is excited by what he sees. The stimulus is from without. He saw the technicalities of the Law-courts; observed a charitable trustee misusing the charity moneys; perceived that George IV. oppressed Queen Caroline; went to Old Sarum. He is not absorbed in a creed: he is pricked by facts. Accordingly his activity is miscellaneous. The votary of a doctrine is concentrated, for the logical consequences of a doctrine are limited. But an open-minded man, who is aroused by what he sees, quick at discerning abuses, ready to reform any thing which he thinks goes wrong,—will never have done acting. The details of life are endless, and each of them may go wrong in a hundred ways.

Another faculty of Brougham (in metaphysics it is perhaps but a phase of the same) is the faculty of easy anger. The supine placidity of civilization is not favorable to animosity. A placid Conservative is perhaps a little pleased that the world is going a little ill. Lord Brougham does not feel this. Like an Englishman on the Continent, he is ready to blow up any one. He is a Jonah of detail; he is angry at the dust of life, and wroth with the misfeasances of *employés*. The most reverberating of bastin-

adoes is the official mind basted by Brougham. You did *this* wrong; why did you omit *that*? document C ought to be on the third file; payer D is wrongly docketed in the ninth file. Red tape will scarcely succeed when it is questioned; you should take it as Don Quixote did his helmet, without examination, for a most excellent helmet. A vehement industrious man proposing to untie papers and not proposing to spare errors is the terror of a respectable administrator. "Such an unpracticable man, Sir, interfering with the *office*, attacking private character, messing in what cannot concern him." These are the jibes which attend an irritable anxiety for the good of others. They have attended Lord Brougham through life. He has enough of misanthropy to be a philanthropist.

How much of this is temper, and how much public spirit, it is not for any one to attempt to say. That a natural pleasure in wrath is part of his character, no one who has studied the career of Brougham can doubt. But no fair person can doubt either that he has shown on many great occasions—and, what is more, on many petty occasions—a rare zeal for the public welfare. He may not be capable of the settled calm by which the world is best administered. There is a want of consistency in his goodness, of concentration in his action. The gusts of passion pass over him, and he is gone for a time you can scarcely say where. But though he is the creature of impulse, his impulses are often generous and noble ones. No one would do what he has done, no one could have the intense motive power to do what he has done, without a large share of diffused unselfishness. The irritation of the most acute excitability would not suffice. It is almost an axiom in estimates of human nature, that in its larger operations all that nature must concur. Doubtless there is a thread of calculation in the midst of his impulses; no man rises to be lord-chancellor without, at least in lulls and intervals of impulse, a most discriminating and careful judgment of men and things and chances. But after every set-off and abatement, and without any softening of unamiable indications, there will yet remain—and a long series of years will continue to admire it—an eager principle of disinterested action.

Lord Brougham's intellectual powers were as fitted for the functions of a miscellaneous agitator as his moral character. The first of these, perhaps, is a singular faculty of conspicuous labor. In general, the work of agitation proceeds in this way: a conspicuous, fascinating popular orator is ever on the surface, ever ready with appropriate argument, making motions, attracting public attention; beneath and out of sight are innumerable workers and students, unfit for the public eye, getting up the facts, elaborating conclusions, supplying the conspicuous orator with the *data* on which he lives. There is a perpetual controversy, when the narrative of the agitation comes to be written, whether the merit of what is achieved belongs to the skilful advocate who makes a subtle use of what is provided for him, or the laborious inferiors and juniors who compose the brief and set in order the evidence. For all that comes before the public, Lord Brougham has wonderful power; he can make motions, addresses, orations, when you wish and on what you wish. He is like a machine for moving amendments. He can keep at work any number of persons under him. Every agitation has a tendency to have an office; some league, some society, some body of laborers must work regularly at its details. Mr. Brougham was able to rush hither and thither through a hundred such kinds of men, and gather up the whole stock of the most recent information, the extreme decimals of the statistics, and diffuse them immediately with eager comment to a listening world. This may not, indeed is not, the strictest and most straining kind of labor; the anxious, wearing, verifying, self-imposed scrutiny of scattered and complicated details is a far more exhausting task; it is this which makes the eye dim and the face pale and the mind heavy. The excitement of a multifarious agitation will carry the energies through much; the last touches, and it is these which exhaust, need not be put on any one subject. Yet, after all deductions, such a career requires a quantity far surpassing all that most men have of life and *verve* and mind.

Another advantage of Lord Brougham, is his extreme readiness; what he can do, he can do at a moment's notice. He has always had this power. Lord Holland, in

his Memoirs referring to transactions which took place many years ago, gives an illustration of it. "The management of our press," he is speaking of the question of the general election of 1807, "fell into the hands of Mr. Brougham. With that active and able individual I had become acquainted through Mr. Allen in 1805. At the formation of Lord Grenville's ministry, he had written, at my suggestion, a pamphlet called the *State of the Nation*. He subsequently accompanied Lord Rosslyn to Lisbon. His early connection with the Abolitionists had familiarized him with the means of circulating political papers, and given him some weight with those best qualified to co-operate in such an undertaking. His extensive knowledge, his extraordinary readiness, his assiduity and habits of composition, enabled him to correct some articles, and to furnish a prodigious number himself. With partial and scanty assistance from Mr. Allen, myself, and one or two more, he in the course of a few days filled every book-seller's shop with pamphlets,—most London newspapers, and all country ones without exception, with paragraphs,—and supplied a large portion of the boroughs throughout the kingdom with handbills adapted to the local interests of the candidates, and all tending to enforce the conduct, elucidate the measures, or expose the adversaries of the Whigs."

Another power which was early remarked of Brougham, and which is as necessary as any to an important leader in great movements, is a skilful manipulation of men. Sir James Mackintosh noted in his *Journal* on the 30th of January 1818: "The address and insinuation of Brougham are so great, that nothing but the bad temper which he cannot always hide could hinder him from mastering every body as he does Romilly. He *leads* others to his opinion; he generally appears at first to concur with theirs, and never more than half opposes it at once. This management is helped by an air of easy frankness that would lay suspicion itself asleep. He will place himself at the head of an opposition among whom he is unpopular; he will conquer the House of Commons, who hate, but now begin to fear him. An observer of faces would fancy he noted in Lord Brougham this pliant astuteneness marred by ill-temper. It has marked his career.



Another essential quality in multifarious agitation is an extreme versatility. No one can deny Lord Brougham this. An apparently close observer has described him: "Take the routine of a day, for instance. In his early life he has been known to attend, in his place in Court, on circuit, at an early hour in the morning. After having successfully pleaded the cause of his client, he drives off to the hustings, and delivers, at different places, eloquent and spirited speeches to the electors. He then sits down in the retirement of his closet to pen an address to the Glasgow students, perhaps, or an elaborate article in the *Edinburgh Review*. The active labors of the day are closed with preparation for the Court business of the following morning; and then, in place of retiring to rest, as ordinary men would after such exertions, he spends the night in abstruse study, or in social intercourse with some friend from whom he has been long separated. Yet he would be seen as early as eight on the following morning, actively engaged in the Court, in defence of some unfortunate object of government persecution; astonishing the auditory, and his fellow-lawyers no less, with the freshness and power of his eloquence. A fair contrast with this history of a day, in early life, would be that of one at a more advanced period; say, in the year 1832. A watchful observer might see the new Lord Chancellor seated in the Court over which he presided, from an early hour in the morning until the afternoon, listening to the arguments of counsel, and mastering the points of cases with a grasp of mind that enabled him to give those speedy and unembarrassed judgments that have so injured him with the profession. If he followed his course, he would see him, soon after the opening of the House of Lords, addressing their lordships on some intricate question of law, with an acuteness that drew down approbation even from his opponents; or, on some all-engrossing political topic, casting firebrands into the camp of the enemy, and awakening them from the complacent repose of conviction to the hot contest with more active and inquiring intellects. Then, in an hour or so, he might follow him to the Mechanics' Institution, and hear an able and stimulating discourse on education, admirably adapted to the peculiar capacity of his auditors; and towards ten, perhaps,

at a Literary and Scientific Institution in Marylebone, the same Proteus-like intellect might be found expounding the intricacies of physical science with a never-tiring and elastic power. Yet, during all those multitudinous exertions, time would be found for the composition of a discourse on Natural Theology, that bears no marks of haste or excitement of mind, but presents as calm a face as though it had been the laborious production of a contemplative philosopher." We may differ in our estimate of the *quality* of these various efforts; but no one can deny to him who was capable of them a great share in what Adam Smith mentioned as one of the most important facilities to the intellectual laborer,—a quickness in "changing his hand."

Nor would any of these powers be sufficient, without that which is, in some sense, the principle of them all—an enterprising intellect. In the present day this is among the rarest gifts. The speciality of pursuits is attended with a timidity of mind. Each subject is given up to men who cultivate it, and it only; who are familiar with its niceties, and absorbed in its details. There is no one who dares to look at the whole. "I have taken *all* knowledge to be my province," said Lord Bacon. The notion, and still more the expression, of it seems ridiculous now. The survey of each plot in the world of knowledge is becoming more complete. We shall have a plan of each soon, on a seven-inch scale; but we are losing the picturesque pictures of the outside and surface of knowledge in the survey of its whole. We have the petty survey, as we say, but no chart, no globe of the entire world; no bold sketch of its obvious phenomena, as they strike the wayfarer and impress themselves on the imagination. The man of the speciality cannot describe the large outlines; he is too close upon the minutæ; he does not know the relations of other knowledge, and no one else dares to infringe on his province—on the "study of his life"—for fear of committing errors in detail which he alone knows, and which he may expose. Lord Brougham has nothing of this cowardice. He is ready to give, in their boldest and most general form, the rough outlines of knowledge as they strike the man of the world, occupied in its affairs and familiar with its wishes. He is not cooped up in a single topic, and he has

no dread of those who are. He may fall into error, but he exhibits a subject as it is seen by those who know other subjects, by a man who knows the world; he at least attempts an embracing conception of his topic, he makes you feel its connection with reality and affairs. He has exhibited this virtue at all stages of his career, but it was most valuable in his earlier time. There is no requisite so important as intellectual courage in one who seeks to improve all things in all ways.

His oratory also suits the character of the hundred-subject agitator well. It is rough-and-ready. It abounds in sarcasm, in vituperation, in aggression. It does not shrink from detail. It would batter any thing at any moment. We may think as we will on its merits as a work of art, but no one can deny its exact adaptation to a versatile and rushing agitator—to a Tribune of detail.

The deficiencies of Brougham's character—in some cases they seem but the unfavorable aspect of its excellencies—were also fitted for his first career. The first of these, to say it in a sentence, is the want of a thinking intellect. A miscellaneous agitator must be ready to catch at any thing, to attack every thing, to blame any one. This is not the life for a mind of anxious deliberation. The patient philosopher, who is cautious in his positions, dubious of his data, slow in his conclusions, must fail at once. He would be investigating while he should attack, inquiring while he should speak. He could not state upon a chance; the moment of action would be gone. A sanguine and speedy intellect, ready to acquire by its very idea, all but excludes the examining, scrupulous, hesitating intellect which reflects.

Nor would a man of very sensitive judgment endure such a career. An agitator must err by excess; a delicate nature errs by defects. There is a certain coarseness in the abusive breed. A Cleon should not feel failure. No man has ever praised very highly Lord Brougham's judgment; but to have exceedingly improved it would perhaps have impaired his earlier utility. You might as fitly employ some delicate lady as a rough-rider, as a man of a poisoning refining judgment in the task of a grievance-stater.

Harsh nerves, too, are no disadvantage. Perhaps they are essential. Very nice nerves would shrink from a scattered and jangled

life. Three days out of six the sensitive frame would be jarred, the agitator would be useless. It is possible, indeed, to imagine that in a single noble cause something that would light up the imagination, that would move the inner soul, a temperament the most delicate, a frame that is most poetic, might well be interested absorbingly. A little of such qualities may be essential. The apostle of a creed must have the nature to comprehend that creed; his fancy must take it in, his feelings realize it, his nature absorb it. To move the finer nature, you need the deeper nature. Perhaps even in a meaner cause, in something which you should take hold on the moving mob, sway the masses, rule the popular fancy, rough as the task of the mob-orator is, you require the delicate imagination. One finds some trace of it—still more of what is its natural accompaniment, a sweet nature—buried in the huge frame and coarse exterior of O'Connell. No unpoetic heart could touch the Irish people. Lord Brougham is prose itself. He was described, many years ago, as excelling all men in a knowledge of the course of exchange. "He is," continued the satirist, "apprised of the exact state of our exports and imports, and scarce a ship clears out its cargo at Liverpool or Hull but he has the notice of the bill of lading." To explain the grievances of men of business needs no poetic nature. It scarcely needs the highest powers of invective. There is something nearly ridiculous in being the "Mirabeau of sums."

There is a last quality, which is difficult to describe in the language of books, but which Lord Brougham excels in, and which has perhaps been of more value to him than all his other qualities put together. In the speech of ordinary men it is called "devil;" persons instructed in the German language call it "the dæmonic element." What it is one can hardly express in a single sentence. It is most easily explained by physiognomy. There is a glare in some men's eyes which seems to say, "Beware, I am dangerous; *noli me tangere*." Lord Brougham's face has this. A mischievous excitability is the most obvious expression of it. If he were a horse nobody would buy him; with that eye, no one could answer for his temper. Such men are often not really resolute; but they are not pleasant to be near in a difficulty. They have an aggressive eagerness which is for-

midable. They would kick against the pricks sooner than not kick at all. A little of the demon is excellent for an agitator.

His peculiar adaptation to his peculiar career raised Mr. Brougham, in a few years, to a position such as few men have ever obtained in England—such as no other man perhaps has attained by popular agitation. When he became member for Yorkshire, in 1830, he was a power in the country. The cause which he was advocating had grown of itself. The power of the middle classes, especially of the commercial classes, had increased, Lord Eldon was retiring. Lord Sidmouth had retired. What we now call liberality was coming into fashion. Men no longer regarded the half-feudal constitution as a “form of thought.” Argument was at least thought fair. And this seems likely and natural. No one can wonder that the influence of men of business grew with the development of business, and that they adopted the plain, straightforward, cautious creed, which we now know to be congenial to them. It is much more difficult to explain how reform became a passion. The state of the public mind during the crisis of the Reform Bill is one which those who cannot remember it cannot understand. The popular enthusiasm, the intense excitement, the rush of converts, the union of rectors and squires with those against whom they had respectively so long preached and sworn, the acclamation for the “whole bill and nothing but the bill,” are become utterly strange. As the first French Assembly in a single night abolished with public outcry the essential abuses of the old *régime*, so our fathers at once, and with enthusiasm, abolished the close boroughs and the old representation, the lingering abuses of half-feudal England. The present Frenchmen are said not to comprehend the 4th of August: we can hardly understand the year '32. An apathy has fallen upon us. But we can nevertheless, and without theorizing, comprehend what an advantage such an enthusiasm was to the Liberals of that time. Most Whig ministries have been like Low-Church bishops. There is a feeling that the advocates of liberty ought scarcely to coerce; they have ruled, but they seemed to deny the succession by which they ruled; they have been distrusted by a vague and half conservative sentiment. In the tumult of 1832 all such

feelings were carried away. Toryism was abolished with delight.

Mr. Brougham was among the first to share the advantage. There is a legend, that in the first Whig ministry Lord Brougham was offered the post of Attorney-general, and that he only replied by disdainfully tearing up the letter containing the offer. Whether the anecdote be literally true or not, we cannot say. The first of the modern Whig Ministries is in the post-historical period. We have not yet enough of contemporary evidence to be sure of its details: years must pass before the memoir-writers can accumulate. But in spirit the tale is doubtless accurate. Lord Grey did not wish to make Mr. Brougham Lord-Chancellor, and Mr. Brougham refused any inferior place as beneath his merits and his influence. The first Whig ministry were, indeed, in a position of some difficulty. The notion that a successful Opposition, as such, should take the reins of administration, has been much derided: “Sir,” said a sceptic on this part of constitutional government, “I would as soon choose for a new coachman the man who shied stones best at my old one!” And, without going the length of such critics, it must be allowed that the theory may produce odd results, when the persons summoned by their victory to assume office have been for many years in opposition. The party cannot have acquired official habits; the traditions of business cannot be known to them; their long course of opposition will have forced into leadership men hardly fitted for placid government. There is said to have been much of this feeling when Lord Grey’s Ministry were installed; it seemed as if that “old favorite of the public,” Mr. Buckstone, were called to license plays. Grave Englishmen doubted the gravity of the administration. To make Lord Brougham Chancellor was, therefore, particularly inconvenient. He was too mobile: you could not fancy him droning. He had attacked Lord Eldon during many years of course; but did he know law? He was a most active person; but would he sit *still* upon the woolstack? Of his inattention to his profession men circulated idle tales. “Pity he hadn’t known a little law, and then he would have known a little of every thing,” was the remark of one who certainly only knows one thing. A more circumstan-

tial person recounted that, when Brougham had been a pupil of Sir Nicholas Tindal, in the Temple, an uncle of his, having high hopes of his ability, asked the latter: "I hope my nephew is giving himself up, soul and body to his profession?" "I do not know any thing," replied the distinct special-pleader, "as to his *soul*, but his body is very seldom in my chambers." Putting aside with contempt this surface of tales, it could not be denied that Mr. Brougham's practice at the bar,—large and lucrative as it was—immense as was the energy required to maintain it at the same time with his other labors,—had yet not shown him to possess the finest discretion, the most delicate tact of the advocate. Mr. Scarlett stole verdicts away from him. "He strikes hard, Sir," said an attorney; "but he strikes wrong." The appointment scarcely strengthened the Ministry of the time. Mr. Brougham was a hero; Lord Brougham was "a necessity." It was like Mr. Disraeli being Chancellor of the Exchequer.

After the lapse of years, and with the actual facts before us, it is not difficult to see how far these anticipations have been falsified, and how far they have been justified by the result. All the notions as to Lord Brougham's ignorance of law may at once be discarded. A man of his general culture and vigorous faculties, with a great memory and much experience in forensic business, is no more likely to be ignorant of the essential bookwork of law than a tailor to be ignorant of scissors and seams. A man in business must be brought in contact with it; a man of mind cannot help grasping it. No one now questions that Lord Brougham was and is a lawyer of adequate attainments. But, at the same time, the judgments which supply the conclusive proof of this—the complete refutation of earlier cavillers—also would lead us to deny him the praise of an absolutely judicial intellect. Great judges may be divided into two classes,—judges for the parties, and judges for the lawyers. The first class of these are men who always decide the particular case before them rightly; who have a nice insight into all that concerns it, are acute discerners of fact, accurate weighers of testimony, just discriminators of argument. Lord Lyndhurst is perhaps as great a judge in this kind as it is easy to fancy. If a wise

man had a good cause, he would prefer its being tried before Lyndhurst to its being tried before any one else. For the "parties," if they were to be considered in litigation, no more would be needed. By law-students, however, and for the profession, something more is desired. They like to find, in a judicial decision, not only a correct adjustment of the particular dispute in Court, but also an ample exposition of principles applicable to other disputes. The judge who is peculiarly exact in detecting the precise peculiarities of the case before him, will be very apt to decide only what is essential to, absolutely needed by, that case. His delicate discrimination will see that nothing else is necessary; he will not bestow conclusions on after-generations; he will let posterity decide its own controversies. A judge of different kind has a professional interest in what come before him: it is in his eyes not a pitiful dispute whether A or B is entitled to a miserable field, but a glorious opportunity of deciding some legal controversy on which he has brooded for years, and on which he has a ready-made conclusion. Accordingly, his judgments are in the nature of essays. They are, in one sense, applicable to the matter in hand—they decide it correctly; but they go so much into the antecedents of the controversy—give so much of principle—that the particular facts seem a little lost: the general doctrine fills the attention. No one can read a judgment of the late Lord Cottenham without feeling that it fixed the law on the matter in hand upon a defined basis for future years; very likely he finds an authority for the case which has occurred in his practice: he does not stay to inquire whether the litigants appreciated the learning; perhaps they did not—possibly they would have preferred that a more exclusive prominence should be given to themselves. Now Lord Brougham has neither of these qualities; his intellect wants the piercing precision which distinguishes the judge—the unerring judge of the case then present; and, though competently learned, he has never absorbed in his profession as a judge of "principle" almost always must be. A man cannot provide a dogma suiting all the cases of the past, and deciding all the cases for the future, without years of patient reflection. His mind must be stored with



doctrines. No one can fancy this of Lord Brougham. He is not to be thought of as giving still attention to technical tenets, years of brooding consideration to an abstract jurisprudence. Accordingly, though an adequate, and, in his time—for his speed cleared off arrears—a most useful judge, he cannot be said to attain the first rank in the judicial scale; and such we believe is the estimation of the world.

Of the political duties of the Chancellor, and Lord Brougham's performance of them, it is not easy to speak. Many of them are necessarily secret; and the history of those times cannot yet be written. That he showed wonderful energy, zeal, and power, no one can doubt; nor that the essential defects of his character soon showed him but little qualified for an administrator. In the year 1802, Francis Horner anticipated, that if "an active career were opened to Brougham, he would show a want of prudence and moderation;" and it is curious to read, as a commentary on it, what the Duke of Wellington wrote to Sir R. Peel, on the 15th November 1835: "His Majesty mentioned that Lord Brougham\* had threatened he would not put the great seal to a Commission to prorogue the Parliament;" and afterwards correcting himself: "It appears that Lord Brougham did not make the threat that he would not prorogue the Parliament, but that Lord Melbourne said he was in such a state of excitement that he might take that course." We must wait for Lord Brougham's memoirs before we know the exact history of that time; but all the glimpses we get of it show the same picture of wildness and eccentricity.

The times—the most nearly revolutionary times which England has long seen—were indeed likely to try an excitable temperament to the utmost; but at the same time they afforded scope to a brilliant manager of men, which only such critical momentary conjunctions can do. Mr. Roebuck gives a curious instance of this:

"The necessity of a dissolution had long been foreseen, and decided on by the ministers; but the king had not yet been persuaded to consent to so bold a measure; and now the two chiefs of the administration

\* The editors of Sir R. Peel's Memoirs have left this name in blank; but if they had wished it not to be known, they should have suppressed the passage. Every body knows who held the great seal at that time.

were about to intrude themselves into the royal closet, not only to advise and ask for a dissolution, but to request the king on the sudden—on this very day, and within a few hours—to go down and put an end to his parliament in the midst of the session, and with all the ordinary business of the session yet unfinished. The bolder mind of the chancellor took the lead, and Lord Grey anxiously solicited him to *manage* the king on the occasion. So soon as they were admitted, the chancellor, with some care and circumlocution, propounded to the king the object of the interview they had sought. The startled monarch no sooner understood the drift of the chancellor's somewhat periphrastic statement, than he exclaimed in wonder and amazement against the very idea of such a proceeding. 'How is it possible, my lords, that I can after this fashion repay the kindness of parliament to the queen and myself? They have just granted me a most liberal civil-list, and to the queen a splendid annuity in case she survives me.' The chancellor confessed that they had, as regarded his Majesty, been a liberal and wise parliament, but said that nevertheless their further existence was incompatible with the peace and safety of the kingdom. Both he and Lord Grey then strenuously insisted upon the absolute necessity of their request, and gave his majesty to understand, that this advice was by his ministers unanimously resolved on; and that they felt themselves unable to conduct the affairs of the country in the present condition of the parliament. This last statement made the king feel that a general resignation would be the consequence of a further refusal; of this, in spite of his secret wishes, he was at the moment really afraid, and therefore he, by employing petty excuses, and suggesting small and temporary difficulties, soon began to show that he was about to yield. 'But, my lords, nothing is prepared; the great officers of state are not summoned.' 'Pardon me, sir,' said the chancellor, bowing with profound apparent humility, 'we have taken the great liberty of giving them to understand that your Majesty commanded their attendance at the proper hour.' 'But, my lords, the crown, and the robes, and other things needed, are not prepared.' 'Again I most humbly entreat your majesty's pardon for my boldness,' said the chancellor; 'they are all prepared and ready,—the proper officers being desired to attend in proper form and time.' 'But, my lords,' said the king, reiterating the form in which he put his objection, 'you know the thing is wholly impossible; the guards, the troops, have had no orders, and cannot be ready in time.' This objection was in reality the most for-

midable one. The orders to the troops on such occasions emanate always directly from the king, and no person but the king can in truth command them for such service; and as the prime minister and daring chancellor well knew the nature of royal susceptibility on such matters, they were in no slight degree doubtful and anxious as to the result. The chancellor therefore, with some real hesitation, began again as before, 'Pardon me, sir, we know how bold the step is that, presuming on your great goodness, and your anxious desire for the safety of your kingdom, and happiness of your people, we have presumed to take. I have given orders; and the troops are ready.' The king started in serious anger, flamed red in the face, and burst forth with, 'What my lords, have you dared to act thus? Such a thing was never heard of. You, my lord chancellor, ought to know that such an act is treason, high treason, my lord.' 'Yes, sir,' said the chancellor, 'I do know it; and nothing but my thorough knowledge of your Majesty's goodness, of your paternal anxiety for the good of your people, and my own solemn belief that the safety of the state depends upon this day's proceedings, could have emboldened me to the performance of so unusual, and, in ordinary circumstances, so improper a proceeding. In all humility I submit myself to your Majesty, and am ready in my own person to bear all the blame, and receive all the punishment which your Majesty may deem needful; but I again entreat your Majesty to listen to us and to follow our counsel, and as you value the security of your crown and the peace of your realms, to yield to our most earnest solicitations.' After some further expostulations by both his ministers, the king cooled down and consented. Having consented, he became anxious that everything should be done in the proper manner, and gave minute directions respecting the ceremonial. The speech to be spoken by him at the prorogation was ready prepared and in the chancellor's pocket. To this he agreed, desired that every body might punctually attend, and dismissed his ministers for the moment with something between a menace and a joke upon the audacity of their proceeding."

With the fall of Lord Melbourne's first administration terminated Lord Brougham's administrative career. As every one knows, on the defeat of Sir Robert Peel and the subsequent return of the Whigs to power, he was not invited to resume office. Since that time,—for now more than twenty years,—he has had to lead the life, in general the most trying to political reputation, perhaps

to real character, and more than any other alien to the character of his mind and the tendencies of his nature. We have had many recent instances how difficult it is to give what is variously termed an "independent support," and a "friendly opposition," to a government of which you approve the general tendencies, but are inclined to criticise the particular measures. The Peelites and Lord John Russell have for several years been in general in this position, and generally with a want of popular sympathy. As they agree with the Government in principle, they cannot take, by way of objection, what the country considers broad points; their suggestions of detail seem petty and trivial to others,—the public hardly think of such things; but men who have long considered a subject, who have definite ideas and organized plans, can scarcely help feeling an eager interest in the smallest minutiae of the mode of dealing with it: sometimes they discern a real importance undiscerned by those less attentive; more commonly, perhaps, they fancy there is something peculiarly felicitous in contrivances settled by themselves and congenial to their habits or their notions. Lord Brougham was in a position to feel this peculiarly. The various ideas which he had struggled for in earlier life were successful one by one; the hundred reforms he suggested were carried; the hundred abuses he had denounced were abolished. The world which *was*, was changed to the world which *is*; but it was not changed by him. That he should have been favorably disposed to the existing liberal administrations was not likely; the separation was too recent, perhaps too abrupt. An eager and excitable disposition is little likely to excel in the measured sentences, the chosen moments, the polished calm of the *frondeur*. Accordingly, the life of Brougham for many years has not been favorable to his fame. On particular occasions, as on the abolition of Negro apprenticeship, he might attain something of his former power. But, in general, his position has been that of the agitator whose measure is being substantially carried, yet with differences of detail aggravating to his temper and annoying to his imagination. Mr. Cobden described Sir Robert Peel's mode of repealing the corn-laws with the microscopic sliding-scale for three years, as sever-

teen-and-sixpence on the demand of the Anti-corn-law League, and good security for the other half-crown. Yet excitable men at that very moment clamored for the last half-crown; they could not bear the modification, the minute difference from that on which they had set their hearts. We must remember this in relation to what is now most familiar to us in the life of Lord Brougham. To a man so active, to be out of action is a pain which few can appreciate; that other men should enter into your labors is not pleasant; that they should be Canningites does not make it any better. We have witnessed many escapades of Lord Brougham; we perhaps hardly know his temptations and his vexations.

Such is the bare outline of the career of Lord Brougham. A life of early, broken, various agitation; a short interval of ordinary administration,—occurring, however, at a time singularly extraordinary; a long old age secluded from the actual conduct of affairs, and driven to distinguish itself by miscellaneous objection and diversified sarcasm. Singular stories of eccentricity and excitement, even of something more than either of these, darken these latter years. On these we must not dwell. There are many aspects of his varied character, a few of which we should notice by themselves.

The most connected with his political life is his career as a Law reformer. We have spoken of his early labors on this subject; we have said, that few men who have devoted themselves to nothing else have exposed so many abuses, propounded so many remedies; that one of his early notions is a schedule of half, and much more than half, that has been, or will be, done upon a large portion of the subject. But here praise must end. The completed, elaborated reforms by which Lord Brougham will be known to posterity are few, are nothing in comparison with his power, his industry, and his opportunities. There is nothing, perhaps, for which he is so ill qualified. The bold vehement man who exposes an abuse has rarely the skilful, painful, dissecting power which expunges it. Lord Brougham once made a speech on conveying. "I should not," said, on the next day, an eminent professor of that art, "like him to draw a deed relating to my property."

A Law reformer, in order that his work may be perfect, requires the conveyancing abilities. He must be able to bear in mind the whole topic,—to draw out what is necessary of it on paper,—to see what is necessary,—to discriminate the rights of individuals,—to distinguish, with even metaphysical nicety, the advantage he would keep from the abuse he would destroy. He must elaborate enacting clauses which will work in the complicated future, repealing clauses which will not interfere with the complicated machinery of the past. His mind must be the mind of a codifier. A rushing man, like Lord Brougham, must not hope to have this. A still and patient man, in quiet chambers, apt in niceties, anxious by temperament, precise in habit, putting the last extreme of perfection on whatever he may attempt, is the man for the employment. You must not expect this quiet precision from an agitator. There is the same difference as that between the striking pugilist and the delicate amputating operator.

The same want of repose has impaired his excellence in a pursuit to which, at first sight, it seems much less needful—the art of oratory. We are apt to forget that oratory is an imaginative art. From our habits of business, the name of rhetoric has fallen into disrepute: our greatest artists strive anxiously to conceal their perfection in it; they wish their address in statement to be such that the effect seems to be produced by that which is stated, and not by the manner in which it is stated. But not the less on that account is there a real exercise of the imagination in conceiving of the events of a long history, in putting them forward in skilful narration, each fact seeming by nature to fall into its place, all the details appearing exactly where they should,—a group, to borrow a metaphor from another art, collecting itself from straggling and desultory materials. Still more evidently is the imagination requisite in expressing deep emotions, even common emotions, or in describing noble objects. Now, it seems to be a law of the imagination that it only works in a mind of stillness. The noise and crush of life jar it. "No man," it has been said, "can say, *I will* compose poetry;" he must wait until—from a brooding, half-desultory inaction—poetry may arise, like a gentle mist, delicately and of itself.

"I waited for the train at Coventry,  
I hung with grooms and porters on the bridge  
To watch the three tall spires; and there I  
shaped

The city's legend into this."

Lord Brougham would not have waited so. He would have rushed up into the town; he would have suggested an improvement, talked the science of the bridge, explained its history to the natives. The quiet race would think twenty people had been there. And of course, in some ways this is admirable; such life and force are rare; even the "grooms and porters" would not be insensible to such an aggressive intelligence,—so much knocking mind. But in the mean time no lightly-touched picture of old story would have risen on his imagination. The city's legend would have been thrust out: the "fairy frost work" of the fancy would have been struck away: there would be talk on the schooling of the porter's eldest boy. The rarity of great political oratory arises in a great measure from this circumstance. Only those engaged in the jar of life have the material for it; only those withdrawn into a brooding imagination have the faculty for it. M. Lamartine has drawn a striking picture of one who had the opportunity of action and the dangerous faculty of leisure: "*Vergniaud s'enivrait dans cette vie d'artiste, de musique, de déclamation et de plaisirs; il se pressait de jouir de sa jeunesse, comme s'il eût le pressentiment qu'elle serait sitôt cueillie. Ses habitudes étaient méditatives et paresseuses. Il se levait au milieu du jour; il écrivait peu et sur des feuilles éparses; il appuyait le papier sur ses genoux comme un homme pressé qui se dispute le temps; il composait ses discours lentement dans ses rêveries et les retenait à l'aide de notes dans sa mémoire; il polissait son éloquence à loisir, comme le soldat polit son arme au repos.*" This is not the picture of one who is to attain eminence in stirring and combative times: harsher men prevailed; a mournful fate swallowed up his delicate fancies. He died, because he was idle; but he was great, because he was idle. Idleness with such minds is only the name for the passive enjoyment of a just-moving imagination.

We should only weary our readers with a repetition of what has been said a hundred times already, if we tried to explain that Lord Brougham has nothing of this. His

merit is, that he was never idle in his life. He must not complain if he has the disadvantage of it also. That he was a most effective speaker in his great time, is of course undoubted. His power of sarcasm, his amazing readiness, his energetic vigor of language, made him, if not a very persuasive, at least a most formidable orator. His endless animation must tell even to excess upon his audience. But he has not acted wisely for his fame in publishing his speeches. They have the most unpardonable of all faults, the fault of dullness. It is scarcely possible to read them. Doubtless, at the time their influence was considerable; they may even have been pleasant, as you like to watch the play of a vicious horse; but now, removed from the hearing of the speaker's voice,—out of the way of the motions of his face and the glare of his eye,—even their evil-speaking loses its attractiveness. The sarcasm seems blunt,—the denunciation heavy. They are crowded with a detail which may have been, though acute observers say it was not, attractive at the time, but which no one can endure now. Not only do you feel that you are bored, but you are not sure that you are instructed. An agitator's detail is scarcely to be trusted. His facts may be right, but you must turn historian in order to test them; you must lead a life of state-papers and old letters to know if they are true. It is perhaps possible for the imagination of man to give an interest to any considerable action of human life. A firmly-drawing hand may conduct us through the narration,—an enhancing touch enliven the details; but to achieve this with contested facts in a combative life is among the rarest operations of a rare power. The imagination has few tasks so difficult. To Lord Brougham, least of all, has it been possible to attract men by the business detail and cumbrous aggressions of the last age. His tone is too harsh. He has shattered his contemporaries, but he will not charm posterity.

Lord Brougham has wished to be known not only as an orator but as a writer on oratory. He has written a "Discourse" on Ancient Oratory, recommending, and very deservedly, its study to those who would now excel in the art; and there is no denying that he has rivalled the great Greek orator; at least in one of his characteristic excel-



lencies. There is no more manly book in the world than Brougham's Speeches; he always "calls a spade a spade," the rough energy strikes; we have none of the tawdry metaphor, or half-real finery of the inferior orators, there is not a simile which a man of sense should not own. Nevertheless, we are inclined to question whether his studies on the ancient oratory, especially on the great public oration of Demosthenes, have been entirely beneficial to him. These masterly productions were, as every one knows, the eager expression of an intense mind on questions of the best interest: they have accordingly the character of vehemence. Speaking on subjects which he thought involved the very existence of his country, he could not be expected to speak very temperately; he did not, and could not admit, that there was fair ground for difference of opinion; that an equally patriotic person, after proper consideration, could by possibility arrive at an opposite conclusion. The circumstances of the parliamentary orator in this country are quite different; a man cannot discuss the dowry of the Princess Royal, the conditions of the Bank Charter, as if they were questions of existence—all questions arising now present masses of fact, antecedents in blue-books, tabulated statistics, on which it is impossible that there should not be a necessity for an elaborate inquiry—that there should not be discrepancy of judgment after that inquiry. The Demosthenic vehemence is out of place. The calm didactic exposition, almost approaching to that of the lecturer, is more efficacious than the intense appeal of an eager orator. That "Counsellor Broom was all in a fume," is a line in one of the best ludicrous poems of a time rather fertile in such things; on points of detail it is ridiculous to be in a passion; on matters of business it is unpersuasive to be enthusiastic; even on topics less technical, the Greek oratory is scarcely a model to be imitated precisely. A certain nonchalant ease pervades our modern world—we affect an indifference we scarcely feel; our talk is light, almost to affectation; our best writing is the same; we suggest rather than elaborate, hint rather than declaim. The spirit of the ancient world was very different—the tendency of its conversation probably was, to a rhetorical formality, an haranguing energy; certainly it is the tendency of its

written style. "With every allowance," says Colonel Mure, "for the peculiar genius of the age in which the masterpieces of Attic prose were produced,—a consideration which must always have a certain weight in literary judgments,—still, the impartial modern critic cannot but discern in this pervading rhetorical tone a defect, perhaps the only serious defect, in the classical Greek style. . . . It certainly is not natural for the historian or the popular essayist to address his hearers in the same tone in which the defender of a client, or the denouncer of a political opponent, addresses a public assembly." So great a change in the general world, in the audience to be spoken to, requires a change in the speaker. The light touch of Lord Palmerston is more effective than the most elaborated sentences of a formal rhetorician. Of old, when conversation and writing were half oratorical, oratory might be very oratorical; now that conversation is very conversational, oratory must be a little conversational. In real life, Lord Brougham has too much of the orator's tact not to be half aware of this; but his teaching forgets it.

That Lord Brougham should have adopted a theory enjoining vehemence in oratory, is an instance to be cited by those who hold that a man's creed is a justification for his inclinations. He is by nature over-vehement, and what is worse, it is not vehemence of the best kind; there is something of a scream about it. People rather laughed at his kneeling to beseech the peers. No one quite feels there is real feeling in what he reads and hears, it seems like a machine going. Lord Cockburn has an odd anecdote. An old judge, who loved dawdling, disliked the "discomposing qualities" of Brougham. His revenge consisted in sneering at Brougham's eloquence, by calling it or him *the Harangue*. "Well, gentlemen, what did *the Harangue* say next? Why it said this (misstating it); but here, gentlemen, *the Harangue* was wrong and not intelligible." We have some feeling for the old judge. If you take a speech of Brougham, and read it apart from his voice, you have half a notion that it is a gong going, eloquence by machinery, an incessant talking thing.

It is needless to point out how completely an excitable ungenial nature, such as we have so much spoken of, incapacitates Lord

Brougham for abstract philosophy. His works on that subject are sufficiently numerous, but we are not aware that even his most ardent admirers have considered them as works of really the first class; it would not be difficult to extract from the *Political Philosophy*, which is probably the best of them, singular instances of inconsistency and of confusion. The error was in his writing them: he who runs may read, but it does not seem likely he will think. The brooding disposition, and the still investigating intellect, are necessary for consecutive reasonings on delicate philosophy.

The same qualities, however, fit a man for the acquisition of general information. A man who is always rushing into the street will become familiar with the street. One who is forever changing from subject to subject will not become painfully acquainted with any one, but he will know the outsides of them all, and the road from each to the other. Accordingly, all the descriptions of Lord Brougham, even in his earliest career, speak of his immense information. Mr. Wilberforce, in perhaps the earliest printed notice of him, recommended Mr. Pitt to employ him in a diplomatic capacity, on account of his familiarity with languages, and the other kinds of necessary knowledge. He began by writing on *Porisms*; only the other day he read a paper on some absurdities imputed to the *Integral Calculus*, in French, at Paris. It would be in the highest degree tedious to enumerate all the subjects he knows something of. Of course, an extreme correctness cannot be expected. "The most misinformed man in Europe," is a phrase of satire; yet, even in its satire, it conveys a compliment to his information.

An especial interest in physical science may be remarked in Brougham, as in most men of impressible minds, in his generation. He came into life when the great discoveries in our knowledge of the material world were either just made, or on the eve of being made. These enormous advances, which have been actually made in material civilization, were half anticipated. There was a vague hope in science. The boundaries of the universe, it was hoped, would move. Active, ardent minds were drawn with extreme action to the study of new moving power; a smattering of science was immeasurably less common than now, but

it exercised a stronger dominion, and influenced a higher class of genius. It was new, and men were sanguine. In the present day, younger men are perhaps repelled into the opposite extreme. We live among the marvels of science, but we know how little they change us. The essentials of life are what they were. We go by the train, but we are not improved at our journey's end. We have railways, and canals, and manufactures,—excellent things, no doubt, but they do not touch the soul. Somehow, they seem to make life more superficial. With a half-wayward dislike, some in the present generation have turned from physical science and material things. "We have tried these, and they fail," is the feeling. "What is the heart of man the better for galvanic engines and hydraulic presses? Leave us to the old poetry and the old philosophy; there is at least a life and a mind." It is the day after the feast. We do not care for its delicacies; we are rather angry at its profusion; we are cross to hear it praised. Men who came into active life half a century ago were the guests invited to the banquet; they did not know what was coming, but they heard it was something gorgeous and great; they expected it with hope and longing. The influence of this feeling was curiously seen in the Useful Knowledge Society, the first great product of educational movement in which Lord Brougham was the most ardent leader. No one can deny that their labors were important, their intentions excellent, the collision of mind which they created most beneficial. Still, looking to their well-known publications, beyond question the knowledge they particularly wished to diffuse is, according to the German phrase, "factish." Hazlitt said, "they confounded a knowledge of useful things with useful knowledge." An idea, half unconscious, pervades them, that a knowledge of the detail of material knowledge, even too of the dates and shell of outside history, are extremely important to the mass of men; that all will be well when we have a cosmical ploughboy, and a mob that knows hydrostatics. We shall never have it; but even if we could, we should not be much better. The heart and passions of men are moved by things more within their attainment; the essential nature is stirred by the essential life; by the real actual existence of love, and hope, and char-

acter, and by the real literature which takes in its spirit, and which is in some sort its undefeated essence. Thirty years ago the preachers of this now familiar doctrine were unknown; nor was their gospel for a moment the one perhaps most in season. It was good that there should be a more diffused knowledge of the material world; and it was good, therefore, that there should be partisans of matter, believers in particles, zealots for tissue, who were ready to incur any odium and any labor that a few more men might learn a few more things. How a man of incessant activity should pass easily to such a creed is evident. He would see the obvious ignorance. The less obvious argument, which shows that this ignorance, in great measure inevitable, was of far less importance than would be thought at first sight, would never be found by one who moved so rapidly.

We have gone through now, in some hasty way, most of the lights in which Lord Brougham has been regarded by his contemporaries. There is still another character in which posterity will especially think of him. He is a great memoirist. His *Statesmen of George III.* contains the best sketches of the political men of his generation, one with another, which the world has, or is likely to have. He is a fine painter of the exterior of human nature. Some portion of its essence requires a deeper character; another portion, more delicate sensations; but of the rough appearance of men as they struck him in the law-court and in parliament,—of the great debater struggling with his words,—the stealthy advocate gliding into the confidence of the audience,—the great judge unravelling

all controversies, and deciding by a well weighed word all complicated doubts,—on such men as these, and of men engaged in such tasks as these, there is no greater painter perhaps than Brougham. His eager aggressive disposition brought him into collision with conspicuous men; his skill in the obvious parts of human nature has made him understand them. A man who has knocked his head against a wall,—if such an illustration is to be hazarded,—will learn the nature of the wall. Those who have passed fifty years in managing men of the world, will know their external nature, and, if they have literary power enough, will describe it. In general, Lord Brougham's excellence as a describer of character is confined to men whom he had thus personally and keenly encountered. The sketches of the philosophers of the eighteenth century, of French statesmen, are poor and meagre. He requires evidently the rough necessities of action to make him observe. There is, however, a remarkable exception. He preserves a singularly vivid recollection of the instructors of his youth; he nowhere appears so amiable as in describing them. He is over-partial, no doubt; but an old man may be permitted to reverence, if he can reverence, his school-master.

This is all that our limits will permit us to say of Lord Brougham: on so varied a life, at least on a life with such varied pursuits, one might write to any extent. The regular biographer will come in after years. It is enough for a mere essayist to sketch, or strive to sketch, in some rude outline, the nature of the man.

THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.—Tennyson, participating in the common natural impression, seems to regard the fate of a drowned human body in the sea as being restlessly tossed in the moving waters, which are superficially agitated before our eyes, by tides and winds. We read in *In Memoriam*:

"His heavy-shot hammock-shroud,  
Drops in his vast and wandering grave."

And again:

"The roaring wells  
Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine;  
And hands so often clasp'd in mine  
Should toss with tangle and with shells."

Maury's scientific account of the depths of the ocean is certainly more comfortable, and not less poetical to contemplate. He says, the results of the deep sea soundings which have

been made "suggest most forcibly the idea of perfect repose at the bottom of the sea. It is only the surface, to a comparatively small depth, that is stirred by tides, and currents, and storms. Here sport the innumerable *diatoms*, so small as to be appreciable only by the microscope; and, when their day of life is over, they sink to the bottom, and form a fleecy and impenetrable covering to the larger bodies which have preceded their descent.

I was told by a friend that he saw a corpse brought to the surface of the sea at Scarborough, by firing a cannon over the spot where the man was drowned. It had been reckoned that, after a few days the body would become buoyant with gas, and was thus floated. Is there any fixed rule for this experiment? ALFRED GATTY.

—Notes and Queries.

From Household Words.

## THE COULISSSES IN PARIS.

THE features of this region of enchantment are pretty much the same all the world over, excepting always the tawdry efforts of provincial theatricalism, sure and fatal awakener from all romantic notions. In the wide domain of the great metropolitan boards there are no such jarring associations. The coloring, seen afar off through the misty haze always floating over the parterre, is softened away into a golden vision; while all other stage trickeries become invested with a certain dignity that forbids any degrading ideas. It is one magnificent sham, in which all believers coming to worship have unbounded faith, and would grieve to be awakened from their delusions. Especially is there a certain grandeur in the aspect of a great Paris opera-house, very inspiring even to blazé habitués, when imperial visitors are expected to occupy the grand loge on the left, and the stalls below are crowded to the full, and the balcony tiers are peopled with noble ladies, round whom float clouds of snowy muslin—all so many pictures in gorgeous gold and crimson setting. For everywhere is there gold and crimson—golden shields and garlands on this same rich crimson ground. There is a flood of white subdued light from lustres diffusing every thing. The grand army in the orchestra, ranged in many long files behind each other, are arrayed in gala costume—white ties and evening garments—to do honor to the august presence on the left, soon expected to be here. By-and-by, a rustle and general flutter running round, and upturning of faces in the parterre, betoken that beneath the golden crown and bee sprinkled draperies of the grand loge visitors have arrived, and are bestowing themselves in their places. Those who sit opposite can discern, through the open door the tall figure of a Cent Garde, keeping watch and ward in the corridor. After an instant's further delay, the chef appears suddenly in the orchestra—a man with high bald crown and spectacles. He opens his music hastily, and, looking around him, lifts his bâton in the air. Then, one, two, three, and from a lone, mysterious corner rises the subdued tremolo of the drum. An exciting, soul-stirring moment that, if it be the first night of a new opera—M. Verdi's *Vêpres*, say—in

which the Parisian public takes exceeding delight.

Supposing it now to have reached the end of the opening act, and that the parties who purvey that ingenious sheet, *L'Entreacte*, the evening journals, and *lorgnettes*, are all busy with their callings, the curious stranger, looking about him, will note that many are deep in those evening papers, and that many more seats are void, and garnished round curiously with a ligature formed of a white handkerchief. This is but a sign that the absence of the late occupant is only temporary, and that he will shortly return and resume his rights. But he will likewise be attracted by a door towards the right of the orchestra opening every now and then, and swinging to behind men of all ages and qualities. That swinging door, he will be told, leads to the mystic regions of the *Coulisses*. Those gentlemen have perpetual entrée behind the scenes; and it is by them, most likely, that the white mementoes have been left on the parterre seats.

Behind that awful door, sits always a stern Cerberus—stern, that is to all who come without just title of entry, but otherwise endowed with persuasive and insinuating manners. He has come in contact with so many ranks and characters, that he has grown in some sort to be a man of the world. But, in matters connected with duty he is utterly inflexible. To those whose names are wanting on the little roll that hangs before him, neither prayers, nor soothing persuasion, nor gold itself, can open the passage. That man is known to be incorruptible. M. Cerberus is not to be seduced.

Supposing, however, the stranger to have cemented friendly relations with one of the orchestra, or that M. le Directeur has kindly furnished him with a *passeport*, and the door has swung to behind him, he will find himself, after a few steps forward, in a very strange and novel scene. To say nothing of the mysteries overhead—the pulleys and cordage, like the rigging of a great ship, the ponderous bits of scenic furniture descending slowly, the figures seen high in the air, walking across frail bridges—he will be more puzzled with the stranger scene going on below. Here is a flood of people newly entered by that same swinging door, who



are now busy seeking out their own friends and familiars. Great toppling structures are being moved forward by strong arms to the front. Here are singers walking to and fro, chaunting their parts softly to themselves; ballerinas disporting fancifully, for practice sake, in the center of the stage; captains of firemen, with their lieutenants and subordinates, prying curiously into out-of-the-way corners and by places; M. le Directeur himself, walking up and down thoughtfully—in charming spirits if the house be crowded to inconvenience. There must be added to this, a perfect Babel of many tongues, of words of command, angry chiding, and inextinguishable laughter, from the lively groups scattered over the stage. In the midst of all this, a voice is heard sounding clear above the storm, "Clear the stage, messieurs et mesdames! the curtain is about to rise." Clouds of muslin float away airily to the side. Gradually the little groups are broken up and a stream of habitués begins to flow steadily through the swinging door. There are signs of life to be seen in the prompter's little music-book opening, as it were, of itself. The chef re-appears in his place, and all is ready for the opening of act the second.

There are, however, certain risks and ills which inexperienced Coullisse visitors are in some measure heir to. It is not universally known that there are huge balance-weights swinging over-head, by way of counterpoise, the cords of which have been known to give way, and the weights to come crashing down with terrific effect. Now and then cords and blocks drop from above, with a stray man occasionally. Sometimes a trap will open suddenly at the feet of a curious observer, and, if he be tempted to look down and see what may be coming next, he may perhaps find himself à cheval on some construction, and borne aloft to the clouds—thus, for once in his life, realizing his apotheosis. The toe of a pirouetting danseuse has, before now, done grievous mischief to a bystander's physiognomy. To such pitfalls are the unthinking exposed. Therefore has it been held that the foremost portion of the stage—namely that nearest to the curtain—is the most secure, and furthest removed from peril.

Far behind, beyond even the remotest flat,

may be noted two other doors, each leading to more regions of mystery. Thus is there mystery within mystery—wheels within wheels. One of these opens into the dancers' hall and tiring-rooms, the other into that set apart for the singers. Once on a time, this singers' room was a glittering salon in the famous Hôtel de Choiseul, and still shows the rich white and gold adornments of that decorative age. At present it is a bald and desolate-looking apartment, its only furniture being a single pianoforte and a few benches. For, hither resort, each in their turn, the leading artistes to make their early répétitions of the new opera, the maestro himself presiding. But, in the other salle—that on the right—the proceedings are of a more stirring and enlivening quality. It is always brilliantly illuminated and garnished plentifully with handsome looking-glasses reaching to the floor. Here congregate the danseuses and their intimates in noisy groups. Ambassadors, ministers, peers, deputies, and marshals of France are to be seen here, night after night; Veteran Bugeaud, on one of his short Algerian furloughs, came often too. Very motley and diverse are the occupations of all present. Some are busy putting a last finish to their toilette, while many more are clustered round an ancient and generous friend—affectionately known as papa—who is distributing bonbons and other sweet confection. Others, again, whose turn to go on will come round presently, are hard at work practising steps, putting themselves, as their phrase runs, en train. For this purpose specially, are fixed before the looking-glasses, at a convenient height from the ground, certain smooth blocks of wood. To such elevation will the conscientious danseuse raise her foot; and keep it there poised for many minutes. This process secures proper flexibility for what may be termed the pair of compasses manœuvre. After a fair allowance of this exercise, mademoiselle takes in her own hands a coquettish little watering-pot, and, with abundance of graces, proceeds to sprinkle a small circle in front of the glass. Wrapt admirers look on in ecstasy, mademoiselle's own particular worshipper holding the sacred watering-pot. Then follows a series of bold springs—entrechats, as they are called—and other light gymnastics, until Monsieur l'Avertisseur—there is

no such degraded being as a call-boy—until Monsieur l'Avertisseur draws near and informs mademoiselle that her hour has come; thereupon, mademoiselle delicately withdraws certain preservatives against dust and other foreign matter—inimical to the tint of delicate silken hose—and in an instant has substituted new bright satin shoes for the more elderly ones in which she had been practising. The worshipping is privileged to stand by, and looks on reverently at this toilette.

Here, too, come the first-class artistes, in the broad daylight, to rehearse and receive instruction in their distinct specialities; for, there is a reign of terrible drudgery at those glittering Coulisseries, side by side with that other reign of spangles and enchantment. All day long, there is a treadmill turning, which is worked wearily by the lofty and lowly of the profession. All must bend to this stern training regimen, and Pale Maître-de-danse—as surely as Pallida Mors—stamps his impartial foot alike before the première of the ballerinas as before the humblest supernumerary coryphée. For these there is no private salle: it is a stern law that all there répétitions shall take place on the stage itself, to the bald accompaniment of a single violin. Very dreary, and at the same time very curious, are the scenes at this ballet rehearsal, in dull theatrical daylight, if only from the strange contrast to be seen there. Some ladies arrive magnificently, in their carriages drawn by English horses, and superbly habited in costly finery, while near them stands a young creature in mean, shabby garments, who has had to trudge it from some remote quartier. The stranger who is prying curiously about, will take note of their bonnets lying together upon the table—one, an exquisite little construction, elegance itself, from the atelier of the imperial modiste; the other, a faded, flattened thing beaten out of all shape, and washed in many a deluge of rain. Yet does mademoiselle accost her humble sister with singular grace and kindness, and suffer herself to be addressed on the same easy terms. Further, if the poor supernuméraire has met with some grievous accident, or has fallen sick and is thus hindered from supporting her large family, mademoiselle has been often known to take up the case with a sort of furore, going round among her brother

and sister artistes, gathering moneys for the distressed. A dash of piety, too, occasionally seasons the light manners of the Coulisseries, most of the young ladies attending mass regularly every Sunday, and being otherwise devout. They may be found burning their votive candles before Our Lady's altar, in the hope of deliverance from some little trouble. They are given to little pilgrimages to holy places, and pray earnestly, poor souls! too often, it is to be feared, that some erratic lover may be given back to them.

Returning again to this day rehearsal, which may be likened to a sort of bivouac, the contemplative stranger will find many more subjects for his recreation. Looking round him, he will discover some seated in remote corners, deep in Sue or Paul de Kock, thus diligently improving their spare minutes; some others are keeping close to maternal shelter; while many more are reposing their weary limbs on sofas.

Discipline is very strictly enforced in all stage business. During répétition a certain amount of toleration is extended to mirth and high spirits; but, once the lamps are lighted and the audience gathered in front, any inattention or levity is visited with severe penalties in the shape of heavy fines. Mademoiselle is often disagreeably surprised, when betaking herself to the treasurer's office, at finding the week's salary sadly reduced by these. Oftentimes a note arrives from a lady, stating that she is stricken with sudden indisposition, and is consequently obliged to forego the pleasure of assisting at the evening's performance. This ought to be enough for the direction, who should have sympathy for the fair sufferers; but the direction has little faith, being a dull sort of body much given to doubting, and so sends off suspiciously to know if mademoiselle be really at home and confined to her room. For the poor convalescent has been known to muster strength sufficient for a little dinner at the Frères Provençaux or Maison Doré, and have occasionally been seen, when actually thought to be in extremis, sitting in a stall at the Français, arrayed in a toilette most éblouissante. But, though unreasonably sceptical at times, the direction has still bowels for its flock of bonâ fide sick and wounded. Fractures and sprains attendant on miscalculated pirouettes,

accidents from falling scenery, with other mishaps, are sure to make up a full morning's list of casualties. Medical officers, therefore, attached to the establishment, receive their list every morning, and set forth upon their rounds, visiting impartially the highest mansarde and stately premier. A wise and humane dispensation this, and, in the end, profitable to the direction.

The popular refection behind the scenes is the simple, old-established drink known as eau sucrée, or else a little Maderia wine and water, or, for those who have demi voltes and such trying exercise before them, some very strong cold soup, held to be the best restorative of all. The danseuse usually has her maid, her sister, or mother, waiting at the side-scene, and holding for her a handkerchief and cloak, with a cup of the cold soup elixir. The tried campaigner of the ball season also knows the efficacy of this strengthening extract. Often does some figurante, after lavishing her set round of smiles upon parterre and stalls, fall trembling

into her mother's arms at the wing with a deep cry of pain, "O, mother! how I suffer!" Then, after a little of the panacea and a few moments' rest, she goes forth again full of nods and becks and wreathed smiles, and all the world theatrical holds unanimously that never was mademoiselle in more bewitching or in better verve than to-night. A common ill to which the danseuse is subject, is a sort of chronic inflammation of the nostrils, which obliges the mouth to be kept open for the sake of taking breath, and is found very distressing. This is the bête noir of the ballet, for which, as yet, there has been no cure discovered beyond time and patience.

We have taken but a glimpse at the Coulisses: hardly sufficient perhaps for those who, being men of Bohemia, wish to go deep into the subject. For such readers, have been lately written certain voluminous chronicles, records of managerial life and troubles, with which the Parisian market has been inundated, and which set forth minutely, many curious details.

Easton, Md., Aug. 1, 1857.

E. LITTELL, Esq.

My dear Sir,—I have just read, p. 356, of the *Living Age*, in which occurs, from Notes and Queries, the assertion, that "in one of Augustine's Sermons (the 37th.) *Sermones ad Fratres in Eremo*, we find him positively affirming that he had seen in Æthiopia men and women having no heads but large eyes fixed in their breasts."

With the exception of two, these *Sermones ad Fratres in Eremo* are rejected as spurious, by all the editors of St. Augustine's works. "That frigid author," says Baronius, (Anno 382), "bubbles forth his protentous lies in the name of this great father of the church." "It is wonderful," says Bellarmine (de Scrip. Ec.), "that such sermons should be attributed by any man to St. Augustine. Erasmus (pref. in Aug.) pronounces "that of all the things falsely attributed to St. Augustine there is nothing more impudent than these Sermons, which have neither his sentiments, modes of expression, nor anything worthy of him." With the opinion of these writers, coincides that of Cave, who places, as did the Benedictines, these sermons in the list of spurious works attributed to the Bishop of Hippo.

My reverence for the brightest light that shed a lustre on the Church for a thousand years, will apologize for this communication, of which you may make what use you please, at least

that of assuring you of the esteem for the *Living Age* and its veteran editor, entertained by

Your friend of former years,  
HENRY M. MASON.

P.S. In two of St. Augustine's undoubted works (one the City of God and both before me), he asserts that the flesh of the Peacock when cooked is incorruptible and that he proved it to be so by the trial of a year. I once attempted the proof from a peacock I had for dinner but a pet cat (*micat* inter omnes) ran away with the meat and spoiled the experiment.

H. M. M.

• SOLOMON'S SEAL.—Did the signet ring of King Solomon represent by any engraving on its surface an emblem of the Jewish faith? or was it only an imaginary decree forming a kind of fanciful protection to the faithful children of the prophet Mahommed, and a fearful Ægis to the Genii? In either case has it any reference to the flower so called? I should perhaps have said, did the similarity of the flower to the engraving suggest the name? M. A. (Balliol).  
—Notes and Queries.

PAINTING ON LEATHER.—Those unlovely uglinesses at Blenheim, called "The Loves of the Gods," which have been so cruelly fathered upon Titian, are painted upon leather.

—Notes and Queries. CUTHBERT BEDE.

From Notes and Queries.

### PROFESSOR PORSON.

THE original of the following letter, addressed to Mr. Upcott, is in the possession of the Rev. H. R. Luard, Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College, who has kindly given me permission to make this communication. The interview between Mr. Hughes and Porson probably took place towards the end of the year 1807, as Mr. Hughes proceeded B.A. in January, 1808; though in the memoir of him, prefixed to his *Essay on the Political System of Europe*, (Lond., 1855) it is erroneously stated that he took his degree in 1809. I have endeavored, without success, to discover the name of Mr. Hughes' tutor, who was not of St. John's College, as is evident from the letter.

One of the juvenile dramas mentioned by Porson is preserved in Trinity College library; to which it was presented by Dr. Maltby, late Bishop of Durham. It is entitled *Out of the Frying-pan into the Fire*.

I trust that others, acquainted with facts relating to the Professor, will be induced to communicate them to your valuable journal.

"My dear Sir,

"I wish it was in my power to give you a more detailed account of my interview with your celebrated predecessor, than my memory will now permit. It was the only one I ever had with him. It occurred when I was an undergraduate; and I unfortunately made no notes of it at the time, being then busily engaged in reading for my degree, which occupied almost all my thoughts. This interview took place in the rooms of my private Tutor, between whom and Porson a great intimacy subsisted. After about an hour spent in various subjects of conversation, during which the Professor recited a great many beautiful passages from his authors in Greek, Latin, French, and English, my Tutor foreseeing the visitation that was evidently intended for him, feigned an excuse for going into the Town, and left Porson and myself together. I ought to have observed that he had already produced one bottle of sherry to moisten the Professor's throat, and that he left out another, in case it should be required. Porson's spirits being by this time elevated by the juice of the grape, and being pleased with a well-timed compliment which I had the good luck to address to him, he became very communicative: said he was glad that we had met together, desired me to take up my pen and paper, and directed me to write down, from his dictation, many curious

Algebraical problems, with their solutions; gave me several ingenious methods of summing series, and ran through a great variety of the properties of numbers. After almost an hour's occupation in this manner, he said, Lay aside your pen, and listen to the History of a man of letters—how he became a sordid miser from a thoughtless prodigal—a \* \* \* from a \* \* \*—and a misanthrope from a morbid excess of sensibility. (I forget the intermediate step in the climax.) He then commenced a narrative of his own life, from his entrance at Eton School through all the most remarkable periods to the day of our conversation. I was particularly amused with the account of his school anecdotes, the tricks he used to play upon his master and his schoolfellows, and the little dramatic pieces which he wrote for private representation. From these he passed to his academical pursuits and studies—his election to the Greek Professorship, and his ejection from his fellowship thro' the influence of Dr. Postlethwaite, who, though he had promised it to Porson, exerted it for a relation of his own. 'I was then (said the Professor) almost destitute in the wide world, with less than £40 a year for my support, and without a profession, for I never could bring myself to subscribe Articles of Faith. I used often to lie awake through the whole night, and wish for a large pearl.' He then gave me a history of his life in London, where he took chambers in the Temple, and read at times immoderately hard. He very much interested me by a curious interview which he had with a girl of the Town, who came into his chambers by mistake; and who showed so much cleverness and ability, in a long conversation with him, that he declared she might with proper cultivation have become another Aspasia. He also recited to me, word for word, the speech with which he accosted Dr. Postlethwaite when he called at his chambers, and which he had long prepared against such an occurrence. At the end of this oration the Doctor said not a word, but burst into tears and left the room—Porson also burst into tears when he finished the recital of it to me. In this manner five hours passed away; at the end of which the Professor, who had finished the second bottle of my friend's sherry, began to clip the King's English, to cry like a child at the close of his periods, and in other respects to show marks of extreme debility. At length he rose from his chair, staggered to the door, and made his way down stairs without taking the slightest notice of his companion. I retired to my college; and next morning was informed by my friend, that he had been out upon a search, the previous evening, for the Greek Professor,



whom he discovered near the outskirts of the Town, leaning upon the arm of a dirty Bargeman, and amusing him by the most humorous and laughable anecdotes. I never even saw Porson after this day, but I shall never cease to regret that I did not commit

his history to writing whilst it was fresh in my memory.

"I am, my dear Sir,  
"with great regard, yours sincerely,  
"T. S. HUGHES.

"Camb., Oct., 1826."

MEANING OF ANGLO-SAXONS.—May I, at the beginning of this new year, which is to inaugurate also a new era of brotherhood between the United States and England, take the liberty of asking a question on a subject which has often puzzled me? It is probable that some one of your readers on the other side of the Atlantic may be able to explain my difficulty; for I believe the Americans were the first to use the name which I cannot understand, in the sense which seems to be gaining ground. My question is, "What do they, and their English imitators, mean by *Anglo-Saxons*?" What did the United States Consul mean, when, at the dinner lately given to Captain Hartstein, after substituting Turks and Russians for Dr. Watts' dogs and bears and lions, in the well-known little gnomie poem about "barking and biting," he continued—

"But *Anglo-Saxons* should never let  
Such angry passions rise;  
Their great big hands were never made  
To tear each other's eyes!"

I am entirely at a loss to understand this name; and I wish some one would do me the favor to explain what is really meant by it. I know something of a people who were called by it, a good many centuries ago; who founded, in short, by slow degrees, a very powerful state in the largest part of the British Islands; and who, under the general name of Anglo-Saxons, continued to exist in England and Scotland for seven or eight hundred years. I have, indeed, given myself unusual pains to master their now extinct language, to recover much of their lost history and law, and to make the forms of their civilization intelligible to the people who now occupy the country which they occupied. But I have done this solely because these had become unintelligible; because towards the end of the eleventh century that peculiar civilization received a shock, which gave it a totally different direction, and so modified the whole being of the people, as to cause a system of entirely new combinations. From that time there have been assuredly no (or very few) *Anglo-Saxons* left in England, and I presume still fewer in the United States of America. There have been *Englishmen*, deriving their blood from Celts, Saxons, Norsemen, Frenchmen, Flemings, with a little admixture perhaps of the Old Roman. And these Englishmen, I believe, went to America, where they probably varied the stock a little more by some admixture of Dutch, and even Spanish blood, and by a very plentiful admixture of Welsh, Irish, Scotch, and German—both North and South. How all this can be Anglo-Saxon entirely passes my comprehension.

Still less, I presume, can it be meant to imply

that the social and political institutions of the United States and Great Britain are Anglo-Saxon. This they most assuredly are not. The Anglo-Saxons certainly had serfs, and the Americans have the "domestic institutions," but the English have not; so that even here the parallel escapes me. American writers have already enriched our language with a number of expressions, which I regret not to be able to look upon as improvements. These have been excused on the ground that they are convenient representatives of novel ideas; but I believe that there was not the least necessity for their introduction among us. But it seems to me that this word *Anglo-Saxon*, if it means anything, means what is historically false, and should therefore be scouted by all true men. I believe, in fact, that it arises entirely from Mr. Thierry's dualistic theory, which arose entirely (by his own admission) from Sir W. Scott's novel of *Ivanhoe*. I believe it is intended to imply that the people in England are Anglo-Saxon, but the nobles are not Anglo-Saxon, which is historically false: the nobility in England are just what the people are. And if it is further intended to imply that the people in America, being like the people in England, Anglo-Saxon, have an interest apart from the interest of the nobility in England—not being Anglo-Saxon—then I say that it is politically, as well as historically, false, and should be doubly resisted by all true men. If the Americans recognize the fact that the English people, mixed as it is, and of which they are themselves a great and gallant offshoot, possesses noble qualities of self-government, indomitable energy, high principle, and that ἀρχικον φῶς which makes them the lords of the human race, I shall gladly agree with them. But still I must object to calling the English or Anglo-American people, *Anglo-Saxon*. If the Americans read *Beowulf*, or *Cædmon*, or the *Laws and Institutes*, or the *Codex Diplomaticus*, or the *Saxons in England*, they would learn that the Englishman of to-day has as little to do with Alfred's language, as he has to do with his legislation: that the tongue we speak, and the institutions we live under, are not more like those of the Anglo-Saxons, than the personal appearance of the Anglo-American is like that of the full, fat, light-haired, blue-eyed Mercian, or the rattling "go-ahead" spirit of the States like the somewhat heavy conservatism of the Anglian kingdoms. I am very ready to admit all the greatness which the Anglo-Americans may be disposed to find in the *English* character; but I wish to remind them, as well as my own countrymen, that the Englishman only became great by ceasing to be an Anglo-Saxon.—*Notes and Queries*.

From The Athenæum.

*Sylvia; or, the Last Shepherd: and other Poems.* By Thomas Buchanan Read. (London, Trübner & Co.)—The idea of an Atlantic telegraph was long ago anticipated by the American brotherhood of bards, to be plied on the peculiar principle of reciprocity all on one side; and they still appear to work the Yankee oracle with our transmitted inspiration, sending us but very few immortal messages in return. If we are to judge by such samples of verse as from time to time reach our shores, America is by no means rapidly fulfilling such promise of poetry as she has already given to the world. Has not the tree struck sufficient root, and are not native influences nourishing enough to bring forth the ripened fruit? Or rather, is it not a lack of reliance on present realities,—a want of the eye to see the meaning of things that lie close to them,—that the far-sighted American bards strain their longing wistful eyes on the old country, and overlook the many sources of inspiration lying near at hand in the new?

Here, for example, is Mr. Read, a young poet, rich in promise, and rising in reputation, for whose verses we have recorded our admiration, and in whom we have expressed an interest,—he, a native of the most go-ahead nation on earth, sits down, in the middle of the busiest century of all time, to indite a weakly wail over some ideal Past which he deems pastoral and perfect, in which wail a company of "mournful mowers"—mournful *mow-ers* they are indeed—bemoan that they "are of the iron times." The subject is touched with tenderness and gentle grace, and the poem moves on in a melodious prattle of pretty fancies and dainty images, as where, for instance,—

The white sails through the vapor glowed,  
Like great archangels moving slow  
On some celestial road.

Or the robin, singing in the dewy twilight,  
is said to wear—

A sunset memory on his breast.

But Mr. Read would do much better to leave this kind of thing to the "country party" in England. America, of all countries in the world, is so rich in a possible Future, that she can afford to forget the Past; and certainly it is no worthy work for any poet of hers to regret its receding into the distance. If the poet can help or hearten us by any true word in this complex hurry-

ing time of ours, when the every-day world is bravely at work in wrestling with its special problem, let him sing to us along the road, and his winged words will be made welcome guests in a thousands' hearts, wherein they may nestle and bring the dews of healing on their wings. But go on we must, turn back we cannot; nor may we sit down by the wayside to mournfully regret the times that are no more. If the fire of life be clouded with smoke, because of the fresh fuel heaped upon it which is not yet kindled, then the Poet may help to make its burning somewhat clearer with the added salt of song, or fling on a little sandal-wood to make a sweeter savor. Mr. Read has many qualifications for becoming one of the most successful singers of songs,—sweet, simple, and unperplexing. His poetry possesses a soothing, subtle charm, an affectionate tenderness, and a delicate purity as of the dew-drop, which should endear it to the hearts of the home-circle. As an example of these qualities, we quote the following poem for its suggestive solemn beauty and emphatic feeling, which in its own gentle way reaches the heart of the matter:—

*The Blessed Dead.*

Oh, happy childhood! tender buds of spring  
Touched in the Maytime by a wandering  
frost;

Ye have escaped the summer's sultry wing:  
No drought hath parched you, and no wind  
hath tossed,  
Shaking the pearls of morning from your breast:  
Ye have been gathered ere your sweets were  
lost,

Ere winged passions stole into your rest  
To rob the heart of all its dewy store.  
Now in the endless Maytime overhead,  
In starry gardens of the azure shore,  
Ye bloom in light, and are for evermore  
The Blessed dead.

Ye youths and maidens, dear to Joy and Love,  
But fallen midway between morn and noon,—  
Or bird-like flown, as if some longing dove  
Should seek a better clime while yet 'tis June,  
Leaving our fields forlorn! Oh, happy flight!  
Gone while your hearts are full of summer  
tune,

And ignorant of the autumnal blight,—  
Ere yet a leaf hath withered on the bough  
Or innocent rose hath drooped its dying head:  
Gone with the virgin lilies on your brow,  
Ye, singing in immortal youth, are now  
The blessed dead.

And ye, who in the harvest of your years  
Were stricken when the sun was in mid air,  
And left the earth bedewed at noon with tears,—  
Ye have known all of life that is most fair,

The laugh of April and the summer bloom.

Ye with the orange-blossoms in your hair,  
Who sleep in bridal chambers of the tomb;  
Or ye, who with the sickle in the hand,  
Have bowed amid the sheaves the manly head,  
And left the toil unto a mournful band,—  
Ye all are numbered in your resting land,  
The blessed dead.

And ye, who like the stately upland oak  
Breasted the full allotted storms of time,  
And took new strength from every gusty  
stroke,—

And ye, who like a vine long taught to climb  
And weigh its native branches with ripe fruit,—  
Much have ye suffered 'neath the frosty rime  
Which autumn brings and winter's loud dispute!

But now, transplanted in the fields afar,

Your age is like a withered foliage shed,—  
And where Youth's fountain sparkles like a  
star,  
This have ye learned, they only live who are  
The blessed dead.

But we must say that this book of fugitive  
verse is not what we might have expected  
from Mr. Read as his fourth venture. Before  
he prints again he should get new experience,  
look on more sides of life, win a stronger  
grasp of reality, and let his work grow  
slowly. He is poet sufficient to breathe life  
into fresh material, and finished artist  
enough to shape a richer result.

A BRITISH PARLIAMENT TRANSFORMED INTO  
A "DIET OF WORMS!"—Lord Palmerston's  
appeal to the country was recently characterized  
by a certain noble Lord as a "penal dissolution:"  
a definition which reminds me of a  
somewhat quaint similitude, under which a  
politician of another age and "in another  
place" ventured to describe the perishable con-  
stituents of Parliaments, and their consequent  
liability to a dissolution undeniably *penal*. In  
the course of a debate which arose on the  
Triennial Bill in 1693, the speaker amused the  
House with the following argument in support of  
the Bill. "Parliaments," he said, "resembled  
the manna which God bestowed on the chosen  
people. They were excellent while they were  
*fresh*; but if kept too long they became noisome,  
and foul worms were engendered by the corrup-  
tion of that which had been sweeter than  
honey."\* Grave analogical misgivings as to  
the durability of the new Parliamentary ma-  
terials have compressed themselves into the fol-  
lowing Query: How long will new "*Parlia-  
ment*" keep without becoming *offensive*? Its  
non-liability to "dissolution," at any to a pre-  
mature one, will, I presume, be determined by  
the amount of *Conservative* leaven which is to  
pervade the political mass. F. PHILLOTT.

—Notes and Queries.

\* See *Macaulay*, vol. iv. p. 244.

SUSPENDED ANIMATION.—At the siege of Fort  
St. Catharine, at Rouen, by the English under  
the command of Dudley, Earl of Warwick, a  
young French officer, Francis de S. Sivile, was  
wounded, and being found motionless, laid in a  
shallow grave hurriedly dug. His faithful ser-  
vant searching for his master recognized on a  
protruding hand the ring which he had carried  
as a love-token to him from a lady. He instantly  
disinterred the buried man, and finding the  
body warm, summoned medical aid, which re-  
stored "the dead but alive" once more to his  
home. MACKENZIE WILCOTT, M.A.

—Notes and Queries.

GOOD FRIDAY BUNS.—In the *Museo Lapi-  
dario* of the Vatican is a tablet supposed to  
represent the miracle of the five barley loaves.  
The loaves are round cakes with a cross thereon,  
like unto the Good Friday bun. A correspond-  
ent in the *Athenæum* of last week suggests  
these loaves are representative of a Pagan prac-  
tice,—that of offering cakes to Astarte, the  
Queen of Heaven, to whom the prophet Jere-  
miah tells us the Jewish women offered cakes  
and poured out wine. This cake was called  
*boun* or *bun*. Julius Pollux describes it as a  
cake marked with two horns, and Diogenes  
Laertius as one made of fine flour and honey.  
The word *bous* (oblique case *boun*) is Greek,  
but may it not be Tartar, or some language to  
which Greek is as modern tongue? The sacri-  
fice of cake and wine, before it be deemed a  
Pagan rite, should be considered Patriarchal, or  
rather Antediluvian, for in Genesis, ch. iv. v. 3,  
we read Cain sacrificed *the fruit of the ground*  
(cakes and wine), whilst Abel sacrificed the  
blood and the fat. May it not be possible to  
show that the *bun*—the consecrated bread of the  
Pagan—was in earlier times as *bun* the con-  
secrated bread of the Patriarch or Antediluvian?  
In fact, just as our Lord's Day is no other than  
the revival of the Patriarchal Sabbath, so the  
Christian use of the bun may be taken as the  
parallel to the Antediluvian sacrifice of the fruit  
of the earth, and symbolical of the BREAD OF  
LIFE. H. J. GAUNTLET.

—Notes and Queries.

CHINA: "THE BARBARIAN EYE."—This  
term, used by the Chinese to designate Eu-  
ropeans, appears strange because confined to the  
singular number. A curious passage in the  
*History of the Portuguese Discovery of India*,  
by Faria y Souza, may serve to throw some light  
on it. The Chinese, he says, part iii. ch. ii.,  
boast that their countrymen alone have two eyes,  
the people of Europe have but one, and that all  
the rest of the world are blind. J.E.T.

—Notes and Queries.

## THE DISMAL POOL.

It lies in deepest forest gloom,  
Where huge trees push the sun away,  
And tall weeds catch each struggling beam  
That through the branches peers its way.

It sleeps in bed of flinty rocks  
Whose shatter'd foreheads shrink from light,  
And scowl from out their dusky home  
With frown that makes a blacker night.

It dwells encinctured from the view,  
And stamp'd as with a brand of doom,  
As hated as a spot accursed  
And shunn'd as is a plague-filled tomb.

It seems a haunt where Horror sits,  
And fixes deep her ebony rule;  
And men have named it, passing by  
With bated breath, The Dismal Pool.

A wondrous sorrow seems to rest  
Upon the almost stierless trees;  
And listless as the eye of death  
The livid lake looks up to these.

And never at the morning's birth  
The sweet lark soars this lake above;  
Nor children come with matin glee  
To read their mirror'd smiles of love.

And never in the sunny noon  
The small flies skim its leaden breast;  
Nor ever 'mid those death-bound leaves  
The woodguest hums herself to rest.

And nowhere through the lanky grass  
Beams out the violet's tender eye;  
Nor lily pale upon the bank  
Bends down to see its beauty die.

But all is rough, and all is still,  
And all is night that dimmeth day,  
And all is Upas deathfulness,  
That saps the spirit's life away.

Oh, why, when all the earth is glad,  
And every lake is fringed with bloom,  
Hast thou been chosen, Dismal Pool,  
To be the only home of gloom?

'Tis surely from some primal curse  
Thou liest thus so deep away;  
Unvisited of moon by night,  
Unvisited of sun by day.

Or are thy waters human tears  
That flow in secret evermore?  
And are those traces human steps  
That, like mine own, have press'd thy shore?

But wherefore have I hither come?  
And wherefore am I tarrying still  
Where loathsome things of fear and doubt  
Sink on my heart their pinions chill?

Already droops my soul of Youth  
Within this deadly atmosphere;  
And o'er the morning's hills of gold  
Are clinging shadows dense and drear.

Fast fades the past, where life was peace;  
Dim grow the future's gates of bliss;  
Ah! luckless one, if all thy days  
Shall be a present like to this!

O, burial-place of every love!  
Dread catacomb of faith and joy!  
Come, Hope to lead me from this spot,  
Thou wast my angel when a boy!  
—*Household Words.*

## VERSES

On seeing the Speaker asleep in his chair in one of the debates of the first Reformed Parliament.

BY W. M. PRAED.

Sleep Mr. Speaker, 'tis surely fair,  
If you may n't in your bed, that you should in  
your chair.

Louder and longer now they grow,  
Tory and Radical Ay and No;  
Talking by night and talking by day:  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!

Sleep Mr. Speaker; slumber lies  
Light and brief on a Speaker's eyes.  
Fielden or Finn in a minute or two  
Some disorderly thing will do;  
Riot will chase repose away—  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!

Sleep, Mr. Speaker. Sweet to men  
Is the sleep that cometh, but now and then,  
Sweet to the weary, sweet to the ill,  
Sweet to the children that work in the mill.  
You have more need of repose than they—  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!

Sleep, Mr. Speaker, Harvey will soon  
Move to abolish the sun and the moon;  
Hume will no doubt be taking the sense  
Of the House on a question of sixteen pence.  
Statesmen will howl, and patriots bray—  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!

Sleep, Mr. Speaker, and dream of the time,  
When loyalty was not quite a crime,  
When Grant was a pupil in Canning's school,  
And Palmerston fancied Wood a fool.  
Lord, how principles pass away—  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!

SONNET ON TOBACCO.—As many of the readers of "N. & Q." are interested in poetical effusions on the "nasty weed," I present them with a little sonnet from the pen of Sir Robert Aytoun. This worthy knight was born in the Castle of Kinaldie in 1570, and died in the palace of Whitehall in 1638. It is transcribed from *The poems of Sir Robert Aytoun*, edited by Charles Roger, 8vo., Edinb. 1844.

"Forsaken of all comforts but these two,  
My faggot and my pipe, I sit and muse  
On all my crosses, and almost accuse  
The Heav'ns for dealing with me as they do.  
Then Hope steps in, and with a smiling brow  
Such cheerful expectations doth infuse  
As makes me think ere long I cannot choose  
But be some grandee, whatso'er I'm now.  
But having spent my pipe, I then perceive  
That hopes and dreams are cousins—both  
deceive

Then mark I this conclusion in my mind,  
It's all one thing—both tend into one scope—  
To live upon Tobacco and on Hope,  
The one's but smoke, the other is but wind."  
—*Notes and Queries.*